Domesticating Spectacle in the Roman Empire.
Representations of Public Entertainment in Private Houses of the Roman Provinces

by

Nicole M. High-Steskal

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Elaine K. Gazda, Chair
Professor David S. Potter
Professor Christopher J. Ratté
Professor Elizabeth L. Sears

To my grandmothers,

Mom-mom who made this adventure possible and

Grandma who made me promise to never give up.

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Abstract

Gladiatorial combats, animal fights, and public executions of criminals were parts of the *munus* – public spectacles that took place over the course of multiple days and were an integral component of the social and political life of many communities across the Roman Empire. In this dissertation I reevaluate a corpus of 79 known images of spectacle dating from the 1st century BCE to the late 5th century CE, focusing on images of gladiatorial fights and animal hunts found on floor mosaics and wall paintings in areas once part of the Roman Empire. Rather than regard the images as illustrations of specific historical spectacles sponsored by a given patron, I argue that depictions are visual constructs that condense perceptions of the events into abstracted, abbreviated images. The images do not function as 'eye-witness' snapshots but instead are commentaries on a multivalent event. Taking into account the historical background of the *munus*, features of the visual representations themselves, the archaeological contexts in which the representations occur, and the greater geographical setting in which the sites are found, I identify both commonalities and regional variations among images. The formal analysis of the images reveals that the images conform to types and that they were often consciously adapted to fit specific architectural contexts. My reassessment of the archaeological contexts indicates that the great majority of images of spectacle originally appeared in publicly accessible spaces in private houses, including hallways, reception rooms, and bedroom, in addition to dining rooms. The distribution of these images throughout the Roman Empire is surprisingly uneven, with the largest clusters found at three sites: Cos (Greek Islands), Leptis Magna (Libya), and Trier (Germany). These clusters are shown to be the result of local fashions, historical associations, and the presence of prolific workshops.

In contrast to earlier scholars, I understand the images of spectacle as celebrations of victory that drew upon established conventions for representing the *munus*. My study

shows that the images fulfilled a variety of functions that reflected the social setting, wealth, and identity of a patron, all of which were often heavily influenced by the regional context.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> "I gaze at the fights of [the famous gladiators] Fulvius, Rutuba, and Pacideianus with their straining leg muscles. Painted with red chalk or with charcoal, they appear to be really fighting: brandishing their weapons, they attack and parry…"
> (Hor., Sat. 2.7.96-100)

Gladiators are named occasionally in the works of Roman authors, as in this citation from Horace's second Satire, but only a single author mentions images of them in the domestic context, namely Petronius in his account of Trimalchio's feast in the *Satyricon*.[1] This parody is particularly tricky to deal with as it is difficult to distinguish between passages intended as mockery and those written in earnest.[2] The references to gladiatorial images in the description of Trimalchio's feast are all brief and made in passing, increasing the uncertainty of the intentions of the author. The first mention of a represented gladiator fight occurs as Encolpius enters the house and views the wall paintings including one featuring images of gladiatorial games:

> "I began asking the porter what were the pictures they had in the middle hall. 'The Iliad, the Odyssey,' he said, 'and the gladiatorial show given by Laenas.'" (Petron., Sat. 29)[3]

This account is followed later on by a description of gladiatorial images depicted alongside myths on cups. The irony is that Trimalchio does not actually know the correct

[1] For a discussion of other literary references to gladiatorial images, see Dunkle 2008, 152. Further references to gladiatorial images appear in Pliny (HN 35.52) who mentions that C. Terentius Lucanus had paintings of gladiators placed in the Grove of Diana; these commemorated the games offered at this father's funeral in 132 BCE. Similarly, a freedman put paintings of the gladiatorial event he has sponsored on display in public porticoes in Antium.
[2] This has been pointed out by several scholars, e.g. Bodel 1989.
[3] Translation J.P. Sullivan (Morales 2011).

storyline of the myths, which is demonstrated as he boasts about the large number of bowls that he owns.

> "I own a thousand bowls which Mummius left to my patron, where Daedalus is shown shutting Niobe up in the Trojan horse, and I also have cups engraved with the gladiatorial contests of Hermeros and Petraites: they're all heavy, too." (Petron., Sat. 52.3)

Further references to memorable combats by a famous gladiator appear in Trimalchio's description of the tomb he wishes to have built in his memory:

> "I particularly want you to keep a place at the foot of my statue and put a picture of my pup there, as well as paintings of wreaths, scent-bottles, and all the contests of Petraites, and thanks to you I'll be able to live on after I'm dead." (Petron., Sat. 71)

Petronius's account would have struck readers as funny. The references to well-known myths and literary works, fundamental to Greek and Roman culture, are set side-by-side with recent exploits by gladiators and, in Trimalchio's view, are viewed as having like status. The statements are fascinating as they capture the reality of gladiatorial imagery: images of gladiators are indeed to be found on extant drinking cups, and in the decoration of tombs, and also, as will be shown in this study, as part of the interior decor of private spaces. As a result, these passages are quoted frequently in scholarship. In particular, Trimalchio's description of his tomb has given rise to several treatments that compare his account with the appearance of actual funerary monuments, such as the tomb of Vestorius Priscus in Pompeii, which it closely resembles.[4]

The passages from Petronius have received varied response. Some scholars simply point out the references to gladiators, while others do not entirely know what to make of them.[5] For example, in notes to his translation of the relevant passages, J.P. Sullivan

[4] See Clarke 2003, 185-7; Petersen 2006, 84-122; Hope 2009.
[5] Kondoleon 1999, 321.

comments on the strange combination of myth and gladiatorial imagery.[6] Or S. Hales mentions the decoration and then asks whether it is "[a]n eclectic mix of high culture and low-class entertainment perhaps?"[7] Here Hales alludes to a common theme in the scholarship on descriptions of Trimalchio's house and tomb. Because Trimalchio was a freedman, the decoration of his house and tomb is often thought to reflect his lower social status and a taste typical of those of similar status. An argument is made by B. Wesenberg who simply dismisses the images as unsuitable for a house and thus concludes that the descriptions are to be understood as parodies.[8] Scholarly literature provides little guidance for interpreting the references to gladiators in the Satyricon.

Still the fact that gladiatorial imagery is mentioned several times does seem to be significant. Rather than attempt to offer alternate explanations for the literary passages or to use this source to explain the rich visual corpus of images of gladiators that survives, my study presents an in-depth examination of all known visual material dating from the 1st century BCE to the 5th century CE found in the Roman Empire. By observing the commonalities and differences among the actual images, we can draw conclusions that provide a richer understanding of the place of such subjects in Roman domestic interiors than do such passing literary references. The images do have something in common with the passages from Petronius. They, like the text, are not self-explanatory; they can only be understood when viewed in a larger context.

1. The *Munus* Depicted

The study of images of Roman public spectacles (*munera*) is not a new one. Depictions of gladiatorial combat and other events connected to the amphitheater have garnered a considerable amount of scholarly interest, to the extent that it has even been suggested that these images have been over studied.[9] The images are frequently reproduced, in part because they are exciting and can quickly arouse the reader's interest,

[6] Morales 2011, xxi, 175 note 6, 9 note 38.
[7] Hales 2009, 171.
[8] Wesenberg 2007, 272-3: „Gladiatorenbilder hatten keinen Platz im Haus."
[9] Papini 2004, 7.

especially that of the general public. They have been employed by scholars in a variety of ways, and are especially prominent in publications describing the architecture and use of amphitheaters. Yet in these publications the images are simply used to illustrate texts and give readers a general impression of the spectacles. The images are also of interest to specialists in the games, those who study the hierarchy among types of gladiators and seek to classify their armor. Gladiatorial armor has been discovered in some places such as in Pompeii, and is described in some literary works, such as Artemidorus' descriptions in his book of dreams.[10] But, it is images of gladiators in mosaic, fresco, and stone relief that provide the best evidence for the attire of gladiators. Indeed, reconstructions based on images of armor and weapons have led to a better understanding of the costumes and have also resulted in a clearer differentiation of the different fighting styles.

Gladiators and gladiatorial combat have been popularized through movies, books, and even paintings, such as the iconic *Pollice Verso* by the nineteenth-century French painter Jean-Léon Gérôme.[11] Often perceived as symbolic of all things Roman, gladiators are frequently used today as a marketing ploy to draw people into museum exhibitions or to garner interest in archaeological excavations. The popularizing current makes the study of the spectacles difficult, as publications can range anywhere from academically rigorous and sensationalist. R. Dunkle describes his initial skepticism about embarking on the study of gladiators as follows:

> "As far as I was concerned, however, gladiators might serve as a popular and sensationalistic come-on, but I was not prepared to go any further with the topic.... As I began to dig below the flashy surface of things gladiatorial…. it became clear to me that gladiatorial combat was not an exotic sideshow for the Romans, but an

[10] Artemidorus Oneirocritica, II 32.
[11] E.g. entering the search terms „painting gladiator" in a web browser primarily returns different photographs of this painting, a 19th century imaginary composition of the final moments of a gladiatorial fight.

entertainment that was integral to their culture, demonstrating important Roman values, a virtual symbol of what it meant to be Roman…"[12]

While Dunkle deals with the historical side of spectacle and gladiatorial combat, the basis of my study is the visual material and the meaning images of spectacle would have conveyed to a Roman audience, especially in the 2nd and 3rd century CE. For the purpose of this study, I understand spectacle as comprising the activities that would have been included in a typical Roman *munus*, i.e. animals hunting each other or being hunted by professional hunters, animals mauling prisoners, and also gladiatorial combats.

2. Interpreting Images – Past Scholarship

Sources of Images

Although the imagery of spectacle has been much investigated, my dissertation offers the first comprehensive collection of images related to the *munus* that emphasizes their findspots and places each in its archaeological context. Until now, scholars have relied on compilations of images found most frequently in catalogs accompanying museum exhibitions on gladiators and Roman entertainment.[13] Such exhibitions have been popular since the 1980's, especially in the period following the production of Ridley Scott's blockbuster movie "Gladiator" in 2000. In some cases museums that have mounted exhibitions about gladiators have partnered with archaeological sites that offer special gladiatorial shows, such as those in Trier in Germany and Carnuntum in Austria.[14] It is important to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of this form of scholarship. Museum presentations typically feature both reproductions and original wall paintings, mosaics, cups, and lamps as well as artifacts used in spectacles, such as parts of a gladiator's armor, usually accompanied by photographs or models of Roman entertainment venues. In museum exhibitions the images under study here are most frequently used as a way of illustrating the history of Roman entertainment, the architecture of entertainment venues,

[12] Dunkle 2008, vii.
[13] Landes 1987; Nardoni and Accodo 1989; Barbet 1999; Köhne and Ewigleben 2000; *Gladiatoren in Ephesos: Tod am Nachmittag. Eine Ausstellung im Ephesos Museum Selcuk* 2002; Nogales Basarrate 2002.
[14] See the gladiator school in Trier: http://www.gladiatoren-schule.de/index.php?id=106.

and the dress of the various participants and performers. While gladiatorial topics receive preferential treatment, some exhibitions also dedicate some space to other features of amphitheater productions, such as the animal hunts, but frequently these events are not as prominently featured as the gladiatorial combats. The exhibition catalogs have been instrumental for collating images of spectacle discovered in various countries and have made them more accessible. For example, the excellent catalogs for the exhibitions at the British Museum and the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg. Such catalogs are often focused on a specific geographic area or a single archaeological site, such as Ephesos. The catalog entries are in most cases written by individuals who specialize in wall painting, mosaic, pottery, and the like but who have little to no knowledge of the culture of Roman entertainment. The entries tend to be descriptive, and the images are often used merely to illustrate historical narratives and to validate architectural reconstructions. Rarely do the texts raise questions of iconography or archaeological context, even if they are helpful for gaining an overview of the material from a specific geographic region.

Spectacle has also been a favored and regularly occurring topic at academic conferences, where the theme of entertainment in its different facets has been treated.[15] Issues include the architecture of entertainment venues, the use and function of amphitheaters and theaters, and new finds of wall painting and the like in the provinces. Like the museum catalogs, the conference volumes are useful for compiling images and current bibliographies on particular topics. The contributions in conference proceedings, though, rarely provide in-depth analyses of the images, their contexts, or styles. Usually they simply enumerate specific images or image types. Such contributions are also limited to specific sites, as are museum catalogs.

Excavation reports on single sites and material-based publications, such as mosaic corpora, often include a small number of images or artifacts related to spectacle.[16] The

[15] Domergue, Landes, and Pailler 1990; Kramérovskis and Landes 1992; Alvarez Martínez and Enríquez Navascués 1994; Bergmann and Kondoleon 1999; Nelis-Clément and Roddaz 2008; Wilmott 2009; Fuchs and Dubosson 2011; Nollé, Coleman, and Nelis-Clément 2012

[16] E.g. De Matteis 1993, 117-8, 2004, 48-50; 201-2; Scheibelreiter 2011, 127-9, 35-38.

artifacts and images range from wall paintings and mosaics to terracotta figurines and lamps. These are often treated superficially in part owing to the overwhelming amount of material. Authors tend not to connect the individual pieces to broader discussions of Roman visual art and social history. At most they refer to K. Dunbabin's interpretation of such images as commemorative of the patron's past benefactions.

Images of Gladiators and Animal Fights

The first scholar to draw attention to mosaics of spectacle was Dunbabin in her authoritative publication of North African mosaics of 1978. Dunbabin dedicated a chapter to the analysis of scenes related to the amphitheater in the North African context. She was the first to take an in-depth look at the images, and her conclusions have been widely accepted. Dunbabin derived her main thesis regarding the meaning of spectacle imagery from study of the well-known Magerius Mosaic (Cat.Nr.13), which depicts four *venatores* in the process of killing leopards.[17] On this basis, Dunbabin posited that mosaics with images drawn from the amphitheater were mainly depictions of past events and had a commemorative function. They were exciting images that underscored the prestige of the patron who had contributed to the entertainment of the people – likely in an official capacity – and then commissioned a commemorative mosaic made in order to inform those entering his house of his wealth and beneficence.[18]

C. Kondoleon in 1991, treating Roman domestic mosaics, took an equally thoughtful approach by comparing reliefs and mosaics showing similar scenes of events in the amphitheater. She demonstrates that the reliefs, e.g. those from Pompeii, show the editor amidst the events that took place during the games. These reliefs were set up in the city to remind the public of the generosity of specific individuals who sponsored the games. Based on the frieze-like composition of many mosaics with scenes relating to the amphitheater, e.g., the mosaic floor in Zliten (Cat.Nr.18), Kondoleon concludes that the mosaics would have had a function similar to that of the reliefs set up in public, which frequently referred

[17] Dunbabin 1978, 68-9; see chapter 3.
[18] Dunbabin 1978, 68, 1999, 116.

to past events. Kondoleon argues that providing the pet names of the animals is further evidence for the fact that these images were directly influenced by specific events.[19] Kondoleon does not limit her discussion to the problem of whether these images documented real events. Instead, she convincingly argues that patrons used amphitheater scenes to allude to ideas of prestige and privilege shared by the Roman elite.[20]

In 1992 S. Brown published one of the most influential articles on spectacle imagery and it is one of the most frequently cited on the topic. Brown convincingly argues that images of spectacular violence cannot simply be dismissed as repulsive, as J. Toynbee did in a passing remark in 1973, but must be viewed within the social context of the Roman Empire.[21] These images, she states, which functioned as decoration, provide information about the significance of Roman spectacle and the social value of the events. Unlike other authors, Brown does not immediately conclude that such mosaics were commissioned because the patron wanted to commemorate particular games that s/he had sponsored but instead argues that the depictions "indicate a desire on the part of the homeowner to identify or simulate specific games."[22] Brown also observes that the images are at times "standardized illustrations of the encounters of men and beasts in the arena," and she further posits that these repetitions indicate that workshops used stock repertoires of images. She does not, however, provide any examples to support her assertion.[23] Another convincing idea put forward by Brown is the symbolic presence of the invisible sponsor of the games, or editor, as he is referred to in Latin inscriptions. While some images directly refer to an editor, such as the Magerius Mosaic (Cat.Nr.13) and mosaics in Madrid (Cat.Nr.74), other images insinuate the presence of an editor through the gazes of the figures on the mosaic, such as the mosaic in Nennig (Cat.Nr.43).

[19] Kondoleon 1991, 108-10.
[20] Kondoleon 1991, 109, 12; despite similarities in their argumentation and approach, Tuck 2014 does not cite Kondoleon in his text.
[21] Toynbee 1973, 83: on the killing of leopards: "and this picture raises in a most acute form the problem of how householders could wish to perpetuate such scenes of carnage on the floors of their homes."
[22] Brown 1992, 207.
[23] Brown 1992, 182.

In 2004 M. Papini argued that one of the primary attractions of the mosaics was their opulence or the "voluptas spectandi" that heightened the prestige of the patron.[24] Papini is particularly interested in the images discovered in triclinia and the social interactions that could have been facilitated by such images. He points out that triclinia were enclosed spaces where such spectacles could be reenacted in various forms by those present.[25] While many of these triclinia were located in private houses, the images were not intended exclusively for a private audience. Papini argues that they are closely related to euergetism, the traditional distribution of wealth by the elite. In his discussion he employs the term "Erinnerungsbild" by which he presumably refers to an image that reminds one of a specific event or occasion. Throughout his discussion of spectacle images in private contexts, Papini attempts to differentiate between images that appear to be generic, such as the mosaic in Vallon (Cat.Nr.61), and those that might depict real events. Although these images might be referring to past events, Papini argues that they were mainly selected to impress viewers with the ornateness of the depictions and to serve as conversation pieces or as the basis for reenactments as part of the dining experience. The images, in other words, were installed in order to please the visitors. The main weakness of Papini's argument is its reliance on flawed archaeological evidence. Many of the rooms that he believes to have been used as triclinia cannot be securely identified as dining spaces, and several contexts definitely were not used for this function.

M. Junkelmann's publications (2000-2008) are solely focused on the study of gladiatorial imagery for the purpose of reconstructing gladiatorial fighting styles and the equipment of gladiators from the late Republic through late antiquity.[26] He has analyzed the iconography of gladiators, mainly as they are depicted on tombstones, and has successfully differentiated the various fighting styles and discerned the characteristic attributes of each style. His approach includes the reconstruction of ancient armor according to preserved artifacts and images and experimentation with these reconstructions. Based on these

[24] Papini 2004.
[25] Papini 2004, 53.
[26] Junkelmann 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2008.

experiments, Junkelmann has been able to clarify the use and function of certain parts of the armor. His research, however, is not universally accepted because it lacks scientific rigor and is partially aimed at popular science publications and demonstrations. However, his publications do include some of the most complete collections of gladiator images, and his work remains a useful reference tool.

In 2009 J.C.N. Coulston took an approach radically different from that of other scholars. He does not deal with the matter of euergetism and commemoration of benefactions but instead considers the body language of the depicted gladiators. Images of gladiatorial encounters usually include fighters seen in situations of both victory and defeat. Coulston's, on the basis of his analysis of poses of defeat, suggests that the penetration of the gladiator by the sword resembles images of an explicitly sexual nature. The sexual connotation was also observed by F. Pirson in 2009, and both authors agree that the sexual nature of the images can be a further form of visual degradation of the enemy, especially when a man is being penetrated.[27] Coulston also compares images of gladiators and sexual images that appear on both lamps and terracottas from Pompeii and deduces from this that images of spectacle with sexual overtones must have appealed to the Roman visual tastes. Similarly, he observes that the vocabulary used by Roman authors to playfully describe sexual acts is often marked by references to war, defeat, and military actions. Coulston, therefore, agrees with Pirson that spectacle images with sexual innuendos were often meant to mock the loser, but, depending on the context, it is possible that some images could also have been perceived by some viewers as humorous.[28]

In the recent publication of his dissertation on gladiators and hunters in Gaul, which appeared in 2012, K. Kazek provides a detailed analysis of the gladiatorial images on terra sigillata and lamps from Gaul and compares them with images on other media discovered in the same region. In his iconographic analysis he considers the images on the premise that patrons generally selected gladiatorial images for the decoration of their houses as a way of

[27] Stähli 2001, 255; Pirson 2009, 248.
[28] Coulston 2009, 195-206.

commemorating an event they had sponsored but even more to impress visitors by means of these ostentatious depictions.[29] At the same time he suggests that the images, particularly on lamps and terra sigillata, were also a way of disseminating typical Roman values and ideas of the grandeur of Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire, and its culture. The small pieces were thus an easy and effective form of propaganda that influenced large groups of provincial inhabitants, not only the wealthy. The wealthy were equally influenced by this Roman taste and attempted to adopt the way of life and ideals of the Roman elites which could have led to the inclusion of gladiatorial imagery in their houses.[30]

In a recent survey article, "Representations of Spectacle and Sport in Roman Art" published in 2014, S. Tuck reviewed all spectacle imagery, including depictions of chariot races and sports events, and he drew on many of the images mentioned above.[31] Tuck's treatment of animal fights and *venatio* scenes is nuanced, and he convincingly argues that depictions of animal fights did not represent actual events but rather were a statement of Roman ideology and a display of Roman power over nature. He backs up his line of argument with evidence from Pompeii, where numerous paintings of wild cats on exotic backgrounds were discovered on the arena wall of the amphitheater (Cat.Nr.71). This is demonstrated by the amphitheater in Pompeii, where – contrary to what the depictions might suggest – wild cats could not have been hunted because the arena walls were too low. Tuck, in this case, assumes the images were not inspired by events, but when discussing gladiatorial images, he problematically assumes they were, especially when the gladiators are named. He argues that representations of an entire *munus*, as for example in the Zliten mosaic (Cat.Nr.18), were commissioned by patrons of games in commemoration of their euergetism, and he draws a parallel to the depiction of the deceased's life in tombs

[29] Kazek 2012, 150-1.
[30] Kazek 2012, 294.
[31] Tuck 2014. Tuck's discussion is not entirely satisfactory and does not reflect earlier scholarship on the issue. The article also has several confusing inaccuracies, as for example he does not include the latest publications and dating arguments on the Zliten mosaic but accepts the controversial 1st century CE dating and bases his arguments on this dating. He also refers to Zliten as being located in Africa Tripolitania in the 1st century CE. Africa Tripolitania was actually an administrative unit created under Diocletian in the early 4th century.

in Pompeii and Rome.[32] It is unclear why Tuck does not think of animal encounters and gladiatorial fights in similar terms. Instead, he makes contrary arguments when discussing depictions of fighting animals (though these are also frequently named) and gladiatorial combat, and he does not consider the possibility of a more ideologically based meaning underlying both.

This brief summary of approaches taken to interpreting the images of spectacle and gladiators reveals that there is no general consensus on how these images might have been perceived and what purposes they may have served in their various contexts. This lack of agreement among scholars further demonstrates that the images are perplexing. The spectacle images stand in stark contrast to images of myths and allegorical figures that are more commonly found in domestic contexts. Rather, images of spectacle engage with real life Roman events that were a distinctive part of leisure and social life in Rome as well as the provinces from the late Republic to the late 3rd and early 4th century CE. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most common explanation offered in discussions of spectacle imagery is that these images were commissioned by the elite who sponsored the events as a reminder of their past euergetism and as a display of their wealth. A common, but unconvincing, approach, as articulated by Tuck, is as follows:

> "The presumption of the action images is that of a snapshot of an event, overwhelmingly a specific rather than generic one. Even images that display a single individual carry an illusion of context or narrative and typically celebrate the games and their sponsor rather than the performer or athlete who is the subject of the image."[33]

Depictions of Violence and Their Interpretation

As I will show, images of the *munus* are usually discovered in domestic contexts, where they stand out from the more common images of heroes, deities, and personifications of myth. Scholars have been perplexed by the fact of the appearance of

[32] Tuck 2014, 426-34.
[33] Tuck 2014, 423.

these *munus* images and, in particular, by the violence shown in many of the scenes – this despite the fact that many of the depictions of myths can be just as gory as the spectacle scenes.[34] One group of images in particular bears surprising similarities to scenes from the amphitheater – namely representations of war as encountered in works of Roman imperial art such as the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, with their depictions of very explicit acts of violence by Romans against the barbarian "other." In those cases, too, the historical accuracy of the scenes is debated. In contrast to the study of gladiatorial images, the study of images of war is well-established and has led to a more nuanced engagement with the depiction of violence.[35]

The study of imperial imagery has long been central to the investigation of Roman art and its development. T. Hölscher's work (1987-2000s) is important for shifting the focus away from a strict historical reading of imperial public art and instead pointing to underlying principles and deeper meanings. He developed a theoretical framework for dealing with these images that he has continually refined. His theory is that military success alone was not enough to guarantee fame for the leader and that it required visual signs in order for such success to result in a rise in political power.[36] He posits that over time a Roman visual language developed that was well suited to translating military achievements and other ephemeral events into long-lasting memories. This visual language was constructed so as to highlight key moments that had led to the victory and was based on visual formulae that were used to identify victors as well as to display the virtuous qualities of leaders. The use of stereotypical imagery produced an easily legible iconography that could be understood by both the non-elite and the elite. The images generated reinforced Roman ideologies. Hölscher argues that images of war do not necessarily depict historical realities but instead visualize ancient perceptions of war and emphasize ideological concepts.[37] The depiction of war and of killing or violence in general was necessary in order to show the superiority of

[34] On violence in myth see Muth 1998, 317, fn. 1320; Zanker 1998b, 53-86.
[35] See the excellent volume by Dillon and Welch 2006.
[36] Hölscher 2006, 27.
[37] Hölscher 2003, 2-4.

Rome and its military might. By prominently featuring the pain, fear, and individual tragedy of the defeated, the artists highlighted the courage and strength of the victorious Romans.[38]

Hölscher's ideas have been substantiated by P. Zanker's work (1998-2000).[39] In his article on the depiction of "the other" or "Gegenbilder" in Roman art, Zanker not only considers the depiction of defeated barbarians but also images of spectacle. He convincingly argues that images of violence against barbarians and dissidents did not evoke any feelings of pity among Roman viewers. These images aided in formulating general Roman attitudes and ideologies towards "the other" those who were thought to deserve violent treatment owing to their lack of respect for the superior might of the Roman Empire. According to Zanker, spectacles were a way for large parts of the population to participate in the elimination of "the other" and for the exhibition of "the other" for all to see. In the setting of the spectacle Zanker's definition of "the other" includes not only criminals and dissidents who are punished "ad bestias" but also the animals that performed in animal fights and *venationes*. In the Roman mind, he argues, the animal world was chaotic and in need of ordering. Zanker dismisses the generic interpretation that all images commemorated past acts of euergetism and claims instead that the images, if they were general reminders of ephemeral evets, were above all exciting and accorded with the taste of the time.[40] While he allows that depictions of spectacle could sometimes have referred to past euergetism, this was likely not true in all cases.[41]

In a case study of violence in Attic vase painting, S. Muth developed a theoretical framework that is broadly applicable to the study of visual representations of violence.[42] Muth's basic finding was that, contrary to common opinion, violent depictions did not become prominent as a result of the Persian invasion of Athens. Instead the images began to appear in Athens about 20 to 30 years prior to the war during a fairly peaceful period in

[38] Hölscher 1987, 32.
[39] Zanker 1998a, 2000.
[40] See also Hope 2001b, 112: images of spectacle = memory of transient event.
[41] Zanker 2000, 428-31; this article revisits many points already made in Zanker 1998a.
[42] Muth 2009.

Attic history. Muth concludes that images of violence do not necessarily reflect violent experiences and that the Athenians did not primarily view their images as a comment on violence. She suggests that the Attic images of violence served to illustrate masculine military qualities and competitions of strength. Violence is not the central subject of the images but is simply a descriptive element that emphasizes other aspects of the scenes, such as strength, agility, superiority, etc.[43] Therefore, she concludes, violent images cannot be understood as direct evidence for actual violence within a culture.

While I concede that there are important differences between depictions of spectacle and war, I will argue that the prominence of violence, the expected and justified killing of a predefined "other" (animal or criminal), and the reference to contemporary events in scenes from the *munus* provide significant parallels. Thus theories of the depiction of violence and war are applicable to the study of these images. This was convincingly shown by Zanker, but more recent work, such as that by Muth, could lead to a wider range of conclusions. The study of the meaning of spectacle images has been confined by the notion that these images provide historically accurate depictions of the events that took place in the arena.[44] This is assumed by such authors as Junkelmann, who has attempted to reconstruct the exact armor of gladiators and their development over time based on these images, and Brown, who places an emphasis on the violence and the brutality of the images without considering the meaning of these images from the vantage point of the victor.[45] Drawing on broader studies of depictions of war and violence, it is possible to see that violence in images is often used as a tool to bring out certain qualities of the victorious party and is one of the only ways to communicate certain virtues. Whether these images generally provide an accurate historical account of a certain event is difficult to determine and depends on the context of the image. But, as Hölscher has pointed out, depictions of war and violence only show the event from a specific and biased vantage point and do not

[43] Muth 2009, 222.
[44] See also a similar critique by Muth 1998, 37 of early studies on mythological images. In the case of the myths, the images were taken as straightforward illustrations of the literary versions of the myths and the images were analyzed with the literary versions of the stories in mind; Thomas 2008.
[45] Brown 1992, 1995.

aim to offer an entirely accurate snapshot. Instead we are dealing with images that reflect individual perceptions of an event.[46]

3. Approach of this Study

In attempting to interpret the violent images associated with the *munus*, scholars have approached the images with the question: "why did people enjoy watching death?"[47] However, as indicated above, scholarship on depictions of violence in imperial art suggests that this question is inherently flawed, as it is biased by our modern perception of the images. More appropriate questions might be: what did ancient viewers see and what meaning did these images convey to them? Theories on images of violence and imperial art suggest that ancient viewers might not have perceived images of spectacle as violent but rather as illustrations of strength, virtue, courage, and skill. Depicting violence was necessary in order to provide the context and demonstrate the feat of the victorious gladiator. My study is, therefore, based on theories developed for the study of depictions of violence in imperial art. I attempt to move away from the notion of a "snapshot" and to begin a more nuanced discussion of spectacle images.

This study consists of four equally important components: a treatment of the historical background of gladiatorial combats and other events at public spectacles, an analysis of the visual representations of these events in wall painting and mosaics, an account of the archaeological contexts in which the representations are found, and a consideration of the larger geographical setting in which such representations occur. I treat each component in a separate chapter but the arguments I develop in each chapter are of relevance to those presented in other chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on the development of gladiatorial combat and the *munus* and provides an overview of the complex topic of spectacle. Because images of the *munus* have always played an important role in reconstructions of the history of the *munus*, in this chapter I draw attention to the often misleading use of images in these reconstructions. In addition to the history of the *munus*, I

[46] Dillon and Welch 2006, 20.
[47] Kyle 1998, 7-10; Fagan 2011, 13-7.

treat other topics closely connected to the organization of *munera*, such as the public's engagement with the events, as well as the profession of gladiators and the most prominent fighting types. Authors frequently focus on the occurrence of death during *munera* and the violent nature of the events, a topic which I discuss in greater detail.

In Chapter 3 I deal with the artistic forms and the processes by which the images were made. Though many images appear to be reliable visual documents of specific events, they prove in fact to be formulaic. Image-makers had to follow certain visual conventions in order for their products to be meaningful to both patrons and other viewers. In addition, the artistic conventions facilitated the rapid production of such images. In this chapter I consider compositional forms and the repertoire of stock images that turn up repeatedly, adhering to a common visual language. In order to properly evaluate an image, it is necessary to consider the process underlying its production and the many people who would have influenced the final product.

The archaeological context of many images has not received sufficient consideration and this is likely the most important aspect of my study. In Chapter 4 I analyze the different archaeological contexts in which the images were found and attempt to reconstruct these when sufficient evidence is available in published form. Previous scholars have often employed circular reasoning, for example, identifying dining rooms based on the presence of spectacle images and then arguing that spectacle images mainly decorated dining rooms. I have found it necessary to return to the original excavation reports and reanalyze the spaces based on the approaches now used more generally for the study of Pompeian domestic spaces. The studies and approaches developed for Pompeii, though applicable, have not been applied to the study of works from many other regions of the Mediterranean because scholars tend to focus on their local materials and not to look beyond. As a result the study of the archaeological material has been hampered by modern geographic borders

and language barriers.[48] The consideration of archaeological contexts allows me to adopt different vantage points for viewing images as dictated by specific spatial contexts.

In Chapter 5 I deal with the geographic distribution of the images of spectacle. Images of gladiators have often been taken as a gauge for measuring the degree of Romanization in a given area. However, rather than approaching spectacle imagery as a single Empire-wide phenomenon, I adopt a more regionalized approach, taking into account the distribution of the images. Through mapping the exact findspots of the images, it is possible to recognize significant geographic clusters. In this chapter I discuss each region in turn, analyzing its historical development and regional character in order to gain a better understanding of the possible reasons for the choices in imagery made by the different patrons. For example, a patron living along the Rhine might have had different motivations for decorating his house with gladiatorial imagery than did a homeowner located along the African coast in Leptis Magna. In this respect my study is consistent with the current theoretical approaches in romanization theory.

In studying the *munus* it must be kept in mind that the gladiatorial fights and other spectacle events were multi-faceted and are hard to fully grasp and describe.[49] As explained by J. Clarke, "going to the theater (or circus or amphitheater) was one of the great collective experiences in the Roman city."[50] These events were experienced very differently by those participating and viewing the show, and members of the public likewise had very different motivations for attending the events in the first place. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that the aim of this study is not to provide a single overarching explanation for the presence of images of spectacle in domestic spaces but rather to explore a variety of possible ways of reading these images by reflecting on the architectural and geographic context of the images.

[48] Kampen 2015, 400: "it is clear that people tend their own gardens."
[49] Mann 2013, 102-3: „Gladiatorenkämpfe können nicht auf einen einheitlichen Nenner gebracht werden, sondern waren ein vielschichtiges und facettenreiches Phänomen, das sich je nach Perspektive unterschiedlich darstellte."
[50] Clarke 2003, 130.

The material presented in this study ranges in date from the 1st century BCE to the 5th century CE and was mainly discovered in rooms that were part of private houses. The majority of these houses were richly decorated. While some are located in cities, e.g. the house in Augst (Cat.Nr.39) or the many sites in Cos (Cat.Nr.19 – Cat.Nr.24), most houses with gladiatorial decor were in the countryside in locations that were fairly accessibly situated along rivers or major roads. In order to differentiate between these two types of locations, I use the term villa when referring to houses located in the countryside and house for those in urban contexts.[51] The types of decoration discussed in this dissertation, namely wall paintings and mosaics, were expensive and as a result are suggestive of wealthy owners. Consequently, the arguments presented here do not necessarily apply to all of Roman society but instead are limited to a wealthy upper class and patrons with a certain amount of social influence.

Archaeological evidence for the life of gladiators and their place in Roman society is extensive and ranges from actual skeletal remains to armor and tombstones, to images of gladiators as terracotta figurines, on terracotta lamps, glass drinking ware, stone reliefs, graffiti, mosaics, and wall paintings. This study is based on the immovable forms of decoration, including both mosaics and wall paintings for the following reasons: a) these images were placed with intent due to their high cost and the time needed to make them b) they represent long-term decisions regarding the decoration of a space, and c) the images are a well-known body of material but poorly theorized. Graffiti has not been included in this category, as graffiti could have been etched into the plaster or stone by visitors or members of the household, at any time, and so were not purposefully placed as messages from the patron.[52] Likewise, stone reliefs are not treated extensively in this study because they are typically placed in public contexts. The intended audience for these reliefs differs greatly from images found in domestic contexts, and their meaning was likely somewhat different owing to Roman sensibilities of what was considered appropriate for a public

[51] See also Roymans and Derks 2011.
[52] For a study of Pompeiian gladiatorial graffiti, see Jacobelli 2003. For an overview of gladiatorial graffiti in other parts of the Roman Empire: Langner 2001.

versus a private context.[53] Furthermore, the original archaeological context of most stone reliefs is no longer known. A comparison of images of spectacle in stone reliefs with those in wall paintings and mosaics would be an interesting follow-up project that would provide evidence about the self-promotion of patrons in the public versus the private sphere.

Mosaics are known to be difficult to date, especially when their archaeological contexts were not excavated with care. Overall, I have accepted the dates proposed by previous authors and those better acquainted with dating methods of mosaics. The most recent and convincingly argued dates are noted throughout the text as well as the catalog. The dating of wall paintings is not entirely straightforward either, but the contexts of the works treated in this study were excavated with greater precision, and the dates are based on archaeological work.

The bulk of the material in this study is from the 2nd and early 3rd century CE. This means that the terms and provincial units mentioned throughout refer to the provincial borders and place names common in the 2nd century. The catalog is organized in alphabetical order according to the provinces of the 2nd century CE and then according to site name. Since the ancient toponyms of many sites (especially the villa contexts) are not known, the most common toponym is used in the text.

[53] See Perry 2005, 31-8.

Chapter 2: The *Munus*, a Roman Spectacle

Roman spectacles included a variety of events intended to demonstrate the generosity of those in positions of authority, the power of the Roman Empire, and the values upon which the Roman Empire was built.[54] My aim in this chapter is twofold: to provide an overview of the development of gladiatorial spectacles in the Roman Empire and to point out the role that images have played in modern reconstructions of many aspects of these events. As the most prominent component of a *munus*, gladiatorial combat is the focal point of this chapter, but I will also treat the other elements of the Roman spectacle, namely animal hunts and *venationes*. Throughout I will highlight the many ways in which images of spectacle, particularly gladiatorial combats, have been used and discuss whether the visual evidence has been convincingly employed.

First, I present the historic development of gladiatorial combat and discuss issues concerning the spread of the games across the Roman Empire. Next, I focus on gladiators, their training, origin, and reasons for their popularity, keeping in mind the paradox that gladiators were extremely popular and yet were held to be of the lowest social class. Gladiatorial combat, though only one part of the spectacles, is a multifaceted topic that goes beyond simple discussions of armor and fighting styles. In the following section, I, therefore, deal with spectators and the public's engagement with gladiatorial combat to gain a better understanding of the social function of the games. Because certain honors and political benefits resulted from sponsoring large spectacles, gladiatorial combats appealed to the provincial elites who sought self-promotion. The social function of the games has long been understood as closely tied to the prominence of death during gladiatorial combat. Indeed, the death of gladiators is sometimes referred to as socially sanctioned

[54] For a discussion of the current state of research, see Coleman and Nelis-Clément 2012. The developments in the study of gladiatorial combat are reviewed in Fagan 2011, 17-22.

killing. In this chapter I focus on those aspects of gladiatorial combat and spectacle that help us understand the images in mosaics and on wall paintings and make it possible to differentiate various activities depicted in them.

1. The Events of the *Munus*

The origin of gladiatorial combat is still a matter of debate. The earliest written evidence comes from Livy who says that following a victorious battle against the Samnites, the Romans took the armor of the enemy and presented it to their gods. In contrast the Campanians used the armor of the Samnites to equip gladiators to fight against each other.[55] The account contrasts with that of Tertullian who writes that one-on-one fights were popular in Etruria.[56] In addition to the brief literary mentions, images have been used to argue for a southern Italian heritage of the games. Paintings that show men fighting against each other, discovered in several tombs in Paestum, attest to an early form of gladiatorial contest.[57] The fighters differ substantially from later gladiators. They are depicted using spears and round shields, and their helmets do not cover their faces. In addition, because they lack swords, the fighters from Paestum cannot be accurately described as gladiators, who by definition use the *gladius*, or sword. Rather, they fit the category of *monomachos*, a "fighter who fights on his own," a Greek term used by Polybius to describe gladiators.[58] Because the area surrounding Paestum was originally founded by Greeks, such an explanation seems plausible. However, due to the differences between the Paestum representations and later practices, notably the use of swords by gladiators, the fighters in these paintings can at most be referred to as proto-gladiators.

[55] Ville 1981, 51-6; Futrell 2006, 4-5; Potter 2011, 187-9; Mann 2013.
[56] See Tert., De Spect. 12.1-4. It is hard to imagine that Tertullian, living in North Africa in the early 3rd century, saw or heard about paintings in Etruscan graves showing two men in combat and from these images deduced the Etruscan origin of the games over 600 years later. Yet clearly some information had passed to him. See also Steuernagel 1997.
[57] Teyssier 2009, 15-8.
[58] Junkelmann 2000a, 44-5; Potter 2011, 188-9: Potter argues that this was likely an established term used to describe one-on-one combats and was later replaced by the term gladiator as the sword became the weapon of choice during the combats.

The occasions for these fights are not known, but the tomb context of the Paestum images suggests that the fights took place as part of funerary rites, as is also attested by Livy and other Roman authors.[59] Another possible context for such fights is suggested by Silius Italicus, who briefly mentions armed men fighting at banquets in Capua, claiming that "the tables were stained with streams of blood." This description is likely an exaggeration, because, throughout his writing, Silius tries to illustrate how demoralized the people of Capua had become. The negative Roman rhetoric against Capua was the result of Capua breaking their allegiance with Rome and siding with Hannibal in the 2nd Punic War.[60]

As in the southern Italian paintings, gladiators are first known in Rome in the context of funeral celebrations of wealthy individuals. Livy makes a point of mentioning the earliest gladiatorial combats in Rome and informs us that the first gladiators were three pairs of prisoners of war who fought in honor of the deceased father of Decimus Junius Brutus in 264 BCE.[61] Over time gladiatorial events were held on other occasions and, as they gained prominence in Rome, they became more elaborate affairs with growing numbers of gladiator pairs. As the gladiatorial fights grew in popularity they also became more widely employed by politically ambitious individuals as an instrument for gaining favor with voters. In line with this development, Cicero gives the following advice:

> "And yet I realize that in our country, even in the good old times, it had become a settled custom to expect magnificent entertainments from the very best men in their year of aedileship… If, therefore, such entertainment is demanded by the people, men of right judgment must at least consent to furnish it, even if they do not like the idea…They should likewise afford such entertainment, if gifts of money to

[59] For a discussion of the sources see. Futrell 1997; Mahoney 2001; Futrell 2006.
[60] Sil. 11.51. trans. J.D. Duff: quin etiam exhilarare viris convivia caede/mos olim et miscere epulis spectacula dira/certantum ferro, saepe et super ipsa cadentum/pocula, respersis non parco sanguine mensis.
[61] Livy, Per. 16.

the people are to be the means of securing on some occasion some more important or more useful object."[62]

During the Republic, the public *ludi* had developed as religious, public forms of entertainment that consisted of chariot races and theatrical shows.[63] So-called *munera* existed alongside the *ludi* and originally were gladiatorial fights offered to the people by a family on the occasion of the death of an esteemed family member. *Munera* were, therefore, a private but expected gift to the people. Dio Cassius, among others, tells of the particularly lavish and expensive spectacles presented by Caesar in 65 BCE when he was aedile. In addition to the *Ludi Romani* and the *Megalenses*,[64] Caesar organized gladiatorial contests to honor his father. [65] Here, Dio Cassius makes a clear distinction between the public *ludi* and the private gladiatorial contests, or *munera*. In doing so, we can conclude, Caesar catered to the Roman people in both a public and a private capacity. [66]

The expenditure of vast amounts of money and the political misuse of the games led Augustus to take control of the system and consolidate various forms of entertainment. He systematically combined gladiatorial combat with the *venationes,* and he organized the seating at games, and also regulated their expense and size. As Suetonius states: "He (Augustus) put a stop by special regulations to the disorderly and indiscriminate fashion of viewing the games…".[67] At the same time, Augustus himself took political advantage of gladiatorial games and animal hunts. In his *Res Gestae Augustus* he claims:

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[62] Cic., Off. 2.57–58. trans. W. Miller: Quamquam intellego in nostra civitate inveterasse iam bonis temporibus, ut splendor aedilitatum ab optimis viris postuletur… Quare et, si postulator a populo, bonis viris si non desiderantibus, at tamen approbantibus faciundum est, modo pro facultatibus, nos ipsi ut fecimus, et si quando aliqua res maior atque utilior populari largitione acquiritur…

[63] Potter 1999, 331-5; Dodge 2008, 133-46.

[64] These are games in honor of Cybele also referred to as Magna Mater. The *curule aediles* were in charge of them until 22 BCE when this job was taken over by the *praetors*; see Freyburger 1999, 483.

[65] Suet., Iul. 10; Dio Cass., 37.8.

[66] Wiedemann 1992, 2. The difference between *ludi* and *munera* is important and at the same time confusing as Wiedemann 1992, 7) explains: "Gladiatorial displays were public events put on by public figures in their private capacity."

[67] Suet., Aug. 44; trans. J.C. Rolfe: Spectandi confusissimum ac solutissimum morem correxit ordinavitque,… ; this passage refers to the seating arrangement in the amphitheater and the organization of the seating

> "Three times I gave shows of gladiators under my name and five times under the name of my sons and grandsons; in these shows [*muneribus*] about 10,000 men fought… Twenty-six times, under my name or that of my sons and grandsons, I gave the people hunts of African beasts [*venationes*] in the circus, in the open, or in the amphitheater; in them about 3,500 beasts were killed."[68]

Originally the *munus* only included gladiatorial fights, as is evident from the preceding passage, and it was only around 6 CE that these displays began to include additional components: the *venatio* and the execution of prisoners.[69] *Venationes* were also fights, similar to gladiatorial combats, but they included animals that either fought against one another or against professional hunters, so-called *venatores*. The presentation of exotic animals and the pairing of ferocious or exotic animals made the *venationes* a particularly popular part of the games. It was not only the choice of animals that influenced how the games were perceived, but also the addition of extravagant presentations, such as aquatic displays that were sometimes included in the spectacles in Rome.[70]

Venationes were based on a tradition that had existed since the 3rd century BCE when Roman aristocrats kept tame and wild animals for the entertainment of their guests[71] and also, well-stocked parks for hunting, as noted by Columella.[72] However, by tradition, the public display of exotic animals first took place in Rome in 275 BCE when, during the

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according to social hierarchy. Potter 1999, 329; Futrell 2006, 6-7; 28-30; Dodge 2011, 27-9; Potter 2011, 187-90.

[68] Augustus, Res Gestae 22; trans. A.E. Cooley: ter munus gladiatorium dedi meo nomine et quinquiens filiorum meorum aut n(e)potum nomine; quibus muneribus depugnaverunt hominum ci(rc)iter decem milia… (ven)ation(es) best(ia)rum Africanarum meo nomine aut filio(ru)m meorum et nepotum in ci(r)co aut in foro aut in amphitheatris popul(o d)edi sexiens et viciens, quibus confecta sunt bestiarum circiter tria m(ill)ia et quingentae.
τ[ρί]ς μονομαχίας ἔδωκα τῶι ἐμῶι ὀνόματι καὶ μεν[τάκις τῶι υἱῶν μου ἢ] υ[ὐ]ωνῶν ·ἐν αἷς μονομαχίαις ἐπύκτεθσαν ὡς μύρι[ο]ι... [θηρομαχίας τῶι δήμωι τῶν] ἐκ Λιβύης θηρίων ἐμῶι ὀνόματι ἢ υἱων[ῶν ἐν τῶι ἱπποδρόμωι ἢ ἐν τῆι ἀγορᾶι ἢ ἐν τοῖς] ἀμφιθεάτροις ἔδωκα ἑξάκις καὶ εἰκοσάκις, ἐν [αἷς κατεσφάγη θηρία ἐνγὺς τρισχείλια]καὶ πεντακόσια.

[69] Wiedemann 1992, 55; Potter 1999, 333-4, 2011, 219-20.

[70] Coleman 1990, 1993.

[71] See the list of known events in Ville 1981, 88-94. Later, emperors, such as Caracalla and Elagabalus, are said to have had pet lions; see Dodge 2011, 47.

[72] Columella, Rust. 9.1.

celebration of his victory over King Pyrrhus M. Curius Dentatus exhibited four captured Indian elephants.[73] In reference to another triumph, that of L. Caecilius Metellus who defeated the Carthaginians, Pliny remarks on the killing of 140 or 142 Carthaginian elephants that were hunted down in the Circus Maximus.[74] During the Republic the *venationes*, like gladiatorial combats, became more extravagant and elaborate, culminating in massive animal displays in the 1st century BCE. This type of entertainment has often been compared to Spanish bull fighting, and, in fact, there is ample evidence for the use of bulls in *venationes*.[75] Elephants, big cats, and bears are most frequently mentioned in literature and depicted in images of spectacle.[76] In the arena the animals were accompanied by both *bestiarii*, beast-handlers, and the *venatores* who performed.

There was a specific order in which games typically unfolded. Following the morning entertainment of animal displays and *venationes*, the midday entertainments included executions but could also feature other forms of entertainment such as pantomimes, mimes, and other comic performances.[77] Executions largely depended on there being a ready supply of condemned criminals (*damnati ad bestias*) and prisoners of war who were provided to the organizer of the events by the officials in charge of the judicial system.[78] It is not likely that every city had access to criminals due for executions, so that this would have been a more prominent feature of games in Rome and the provincial capitals.[79] H. Dodge enumerates three ways in which the executions took place: burning alive (*cremation*), throwing to the beasts (*ad bestias*), and crucifixion.[80] The literary sources also describe

[73] On processions of Hellenistic rulers and the display of exotic animals and *monomachoi*, see Walbank 1957; Erskine 2013 (with discussion of earlier literature). Erskine convincingly argues that Hellenistic parades were primarily demonstrations of power of the ruler rather than commemorations of a triumph or other event. The form of these processions, however, would have been influenced to a certain degree by the Roman military triumphs.
[74] Plin., HN 8.6;Potter 1999, 331-5; Futrell 2006, 7-8; 89; Dodge 2011, 49; Potter 2011, 201-2.
[75] Dodge 2011, 53-4; Mann 2011, 66.
[76] Dodge 2011, 51.
[77]Futrell 2006, 92-3.
[78] Potter 2011, 299, remarks on the collaboration between the local authorities and the Imperial judicial system.
[79] Futrell 2006, 89.
[80] Dodge 2011, 83.

elaborate executions staged as myths.[81] These events were followed by gladiatorial combats, which were single combats between two gladiators. Typically, multiple pairs were presented one after another with each fight probably lasting 10-20 minutes.

2. The Spread of the Games to the Roman Provinces

Because *munera* are widely associated with Rome and the large games sponsored by the Roman emperors, scholars directly link the adoption of Roman spectacle entertainment in other areas of the Mediterranean with the expansion of the Roman Imperium.[82] Still, it remains unclear just how gladiatorial forms of entertainment spread across the empire and, for that matter, why gladiatorial combats were universally appealing. There is no evidence to suggest that this entertainment was forcibly introduced into the newly conquered areas. Likewise, the organization of spectacles was not directly connected to one public office but, instead, was taken on by public officials as private citizens and paid for with their personal wealth. Yet, gladiatorial fights became prominent in each province soon after its conquest.

Various propositions have been put forward to explain how and why gladiatorial combat spread so quickly. C. Mann suggests that the spread of the games was facilitated by one or more of the following: the structure of the Roman administration, the settlement of Romans in the provinces, the competition between the cities, and the private euergetism of the elite.[83] The spread of gladiatorial entertainment is also often linked to the movement of the Roman military across the provinces, as emphasized by E. Bouley.[84] Amphitheaters were frequently located in close proximity to military camps (e.g. Carnuntum, Augusta Raurica, Trier, Xanten) and this suggests a strong connection between gladiators and soldiers throughout the Imperial period. As a result, M. Carter has pointed out that these shared many ideals and both valued Roman virtues such as courage, fearlessness, and strength.[85] Another reason for the spread of the *munera* could have been that they had similarities to

[81] Coleman 1990, 44-73; Potter 1999, 332; Futrell 2006, 91-4; Dodge 2011, 83-5.
[82] See. Martial's epigrams in honor of the games of Titus or possibly Domitian;see also Coleman 2006.
[83] Mann 2009, 278, 2011, 76-7; Carter 2014.
[84] Bouley 1994, 37-8; Futrell 1997, 53-76; Bouley 2001.
[85] Carter 1999, 27-37.

other rituals, sports, and spectacles common among the cultures of the conquered regions.[86]

The uncoordinated spread of the games throughout the Empire, however, means that there were local differences in the way the games were organized. For example, even the official in charge of the games varied regionally. The *lex Ursonensis* (or *lex coloniae genetivae*), the charter of the city of Urso, gives rare insight into the administration of the city; it not only names the officer in charge of organizing *munera* but also sets financial limits for the amount of private and public funds officials could spend on the events. It also specifies the gods to be honored by the event, namely Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva.[87] The *lex* signals that these matters were typically settled on the regional level and were not necessarily regulated empire-wide.

Evidence for gladiatorial combat is often used as an indicator for the level of romanization in provincial areas of the Roman Empire. The most visible evidence for gladiatorial games is the amphitheater, a building type common in the western provinces and in North Africa but not in the eastern parts of the Empire. As a result, some scholars have believed that gladiatorial combat was more popular in the West than the East. L. Robert proved this theory wrong when he studied the many gladiatorial inscriptions from Asia Minor and found an abundance of evidence for gladiatorial games.[88] Instead of amphitheaters, other types of buildings were adapted for such entertainments in the East so that gladiatorial combat, as well as *venationes*, could take place in them. As Dodge has shown, theaters and also stadia – such as the theater and stadium in Ephesos and the stadium in Aphrodisias – were adapted, making it possible to use them for entire *munera*, including *venationes*.[89] As in the East, some entertainment venues in Gaul were also adapted. Here, the so-called theater-amphitheater was prevalent. This is a mixed-form

[86] Wiedemann 1995, 44-7; Fear 2000, 85.
[87] Crawford and Cloud 1996, 393-454 - with text, translation, commentary.
[88] Robert 1940, 1950.
[89] For the presentation of animals it was necessary to heighten the walls and include cage areas for animals; see. Dodge 2008, 133-46, 2009, 29-31.

structure that is slightly larger than a regular theater and smaller than an actual amphitheater. Thus, it is not possible to deduce the types of entertainments that took place in a given area solely on the basis of extant structures, because the venues themselves were multi-functional. In Gaul they were used for theatrical productions alongside blood sports.[90]

It is unclear when the gladiatorial games ended, but usually they are thought to have gone out of fashion in the 4th century, and it is known that all state-financed gladiatorial schools were closed in 399 during the reign of Honorius and Arcadius.[91] In Rome and other parts of the Roman Empire there are, however, some references to gladiators as late as the early 5th century.[92] The matter is highly contested, and religious, political, and economic issues of the 4th and 5th centuries are entangled in the debate. Some scholars – most prominently Ville – have suggested that gladiatorial combat was forbidden as a result of Constantine's reforms, which were influenced by Christian thinking,[93] while others – such as Wiedemann and Potter – have suggested that gladiatorial combat simply petered out over the course of the 4th century. Potter has argued that certain reforms and legal codes have been misunderstood and that gladiator combats were not forbidden but, rather, that the codes in question refer to the punishment of criminals *ad ludos*.[94] It seems likely that a combination of cultural shifts led to the abandonment of the games in late antiquity.

Ville argues that while the games might have been formally forbidden owing to Christian sentiments, but in actuality sponsors were simply no longer able to pay for costly spectacles.[95] Wiedemann places stress on the role of Christianity in accelerating the decline of gladiatorial combat and argues that Christianity changed societal norms, which in turn lessened the importance and appreciation of spectacle and gladiatorial combat.[96] Mann suggests that many factors led to the end of gladiatorial games. These include shifting

[90] Also referred to as Gallo-Roman amphitheaters in the French literature, see Jory 1986, 537-9; Fear 2000, 82-7; Dumasy-Mathieu 2011.
[91] Puk 2014, 247-9.
[92] Dodge 2008, 143; Potter 2010, 604.
[93] See Ville 1960, 273-335.
[94] Potter 2010, 596-604.
[95] Ville 1960, 273-5; 332-5.
[96] Wiedemann 1992, 160, 1995, 145-59.

power structures within the empire, the growth of Christianity, and economic decline in the 4th century, which made it impossible for many cities to pay for games.[97] Due to administrative changes and the division of the Empire into two zones, East and West, Wiedemann believes that gladiatorial games developed differently in the East and West and also ended earlier in the West than in the East.[98] Although the economic factors emphasized by Ville and Wiedemann appear convincing, they are not entirely satisfying since other expensive events, such as circus races and hunts, continued until the 6th century.

A recent reassessment of late antique games and spectacles by A. Puk has added another dimension to the discussion.[99] Based on an exhaustive discussion of the sources, Puk clearly differentiates between gladiatorial games, *venationes*, and circus races and points out that the sources for gladiatorial combat in the 4th century are few and vary greatly depending on the region. He relates the decrease of gladiatorial fights to the lack of Imperial financial support and the rise in popularity of *venationes*. These changes in attitude were likely motivated by the factors enumerated above. Puk, however, also reminds us that the social wars in the 3rd century might have made *venationes* more appealing because they would have been less threatening to those in power than gladiators who were skilled in fighting and who were known to be hired at times for other jobs, serving as guards or soldiers.[100]

As with the origin of gladiatorial combat, the end has recently been tied to the discussion of visual evidence. In this case, an image, which has been identified as the latest depiction of a gladiator, appears on a contorniate from Rome dated to around 400 CE.[101] This particular medallion is part of a series of four, each supposed to depict an event that is

[97] Mann 2011, 55-6.
[98] Ville 1960, 333; Wiedemann 1992, 158-60; Potter 2010, 603-4.
[99] Puk 2014, 229-88.
[100] See list of professions in Ville 1981, 290-5; Puk 2014, 261-2.
[101] Mittag 1999, 77-81; Puk 2014, 243.

part of the *munus* (two *venatio* scenes, a gladiator, and a charioteer).[102] An inscription on each reads "REPARATIO MUNERIS FELICITER." P. Mittag argues that the inscription commemorates the revival of the *munus* following the closure of the gladiatorial schools in 399 CE and, further, that it is evidence for the continued organization of gladiatorial fights in the Roman Empire into the 5th century. The interpretation of this imagery is, however, not convincing and not only because one image is not sufficient evidence to prove that gladiatorial fights took place in the entire empire at the time of the medallion's production. Even less convincing is the interpretation of the image itself:[103] the medallion in question shows a man standing above a prone form and raising his right arm, possibly holding a dagger. The typical symbols of a gladiator, namely sword, shield, or helmet, are not present. Furthermore, there is a long sharp object projecting behind the man's left shoulder that is uncharacteristic of gladiators; it is more reminiscent of a quiver. The object at the feet of the standing figure has been interpreted as the fallen opponent; however, this figure seems to have horns and its pose, lying on his back with legs and arms in the air, is unusual for a fallen gladiator. Overall, the image on the medallion is not well enough preserved to support the sweeping conclusion that this is a gladiator and that, therefore, the games continued into the 5th century.

In summary, this brief review of the history and development of Roman *munera* suggests that this form of entertainment originated in Italy in the course of the Republic and enjoyed a long period of development in Rome during the mid and late Republic before being adopted in the provinces. At first *munera* commemorated the deceased, but from the start they also served as entertainment for those who were socially dependent on the deceased. However, over time their political function became more prominent, and gladiatorial events developed into expensive and elaborate affairs to garner popular support for the patrons of the events. As a result Augustus reformed the games in order to

[102] Mittag's discussion is somewhat confusing as circus races were a separate event and did not take place in the context of a munus, thus the argumentation is somewhat faulty as he takes these images as concrete reference to the munus. It is likely that the images are simply referring to Roman games in general.
[103] Mittag 1999, Cat.Nr. 205, Pl. 32.

control the costs and lessen the use of the *munera* for political purposes. At the same time Augustus combined gladiatorial combat with other blood sports, such as animal hunts, and in the course of the 1st century CE a standard pattern for the sequence of events at the games emerged.

The adoption of gladiatorial entertainment in the provinces soon after these were incorporated into the empire suggests that gladiatorial combats were a Roman export product. The Roman military, the Roman administrative structure, competition between cities, and the euergetism of rich individuals likely spurred a proliferation of gladiatorial combats across the Roman Empire. The evidence from the provinces suggests that gladiatorial combats were very popular but that there were regional differences among them, especially in the architecture of entertainment venues. Amphitheaters were the most common architectural form for gladiatorial venues in the West and North Africa but in some areas, especially in the East, the custom was to adapt theaters and stadia or construct mixed forms of theater-amphitheaters for multi-purpose use. While the gladiatorial events went out of style in the early 4th century, the *venationes* gained in popularity, as the hunts supported elite ideals of luxury and wealth.

3. Gladiators

Gladiators, who were the main attraction of every *munus*, underwent many years of extensive training in order that they might fight according to a set of rules and with specific weapons. Although they embodied many typical Roman virtues by their skills in combat and were greatly admired for these skills, they were still considered to be of the lowest social class.

The earliest gladiators in Rome are described by Livy as prisoners of war. In that many of these had been trained in arms, they provided excellent candidates for gladiatorial fights. Rome's frequent wars meant that there was a constant stream of prisoners during the Republic and early Empire who could be readied for gladiatorial games. Using the captured enemy in gladiatorial spectacles was inexpensive, and, furthermore, it was a way of celebrating Roman victory and Roman power. In his account of the Jewish War, Josephus

relates the fate of the prisoners of war after the fall of Jerusalem: "…multitudes were presented by Titus to the various provinces, to be destroyed in the theaters by the sword or by wild beasts."[104] In another place he again refers to the lavish spectacles that Titus sponsored: "Departing thence (from Berytus), he (Titus) exhibited costly spectacles in all the cities of Syria through which he passed, making his Jewish captives serve to display their own destruction."[105]

Many gladiators were captured or born into slavery and sold to a gladiatorial school. A prominent example is Spartacus who, according to Appian, was Thracian by birth, had been a soldier in the Roman army, but then for unknown reasons became a prisoner and was sold (or sold himself) to a gladiatorial school in Capua.[106] Slaves were frequently sold to gladiatorial schools as a form of punishment, but laws were put in place to protect the slaves so that they could only be sold to such schools under certain conditions. Similarly, some criminals were sentenced to become gladiators. These are referred to as *damnati ad ludos*. This was not a form of death penalty but rather a milder form of punishment, since there was a chance of regaining freedom if the condemned were successful in the arena.[107]

Gladiators could also be men of free birth who signed up with a school to become gladiators for a specific period of time. They are generally referred to as *auctorati*. By joining a gladiatorial school, they accepted a status equal to that of slaves but were able to earn higher prize money if they were successful. According to Roman authors, *auctorati* were required to swear that they would accept "death through burning, imprisonment, or by the sword." [108]

[104] Joseph., BJ 6.418; trans. Thackeray: Πλείστους δ'εἰς τὰς ἐπαρχίας διεδωρήσατο Τίτος φθαρησομένος ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις σιδήρῳ καὶ θηρίοις·; Futrell 2006, 122.
[105] Joseph., BJ 7.96; trans. Thackeray: …καθὰ προειρήκαμεν, ἐκεῖθεν δ'ἀναζεύξας καὶ δι'ὧν ᾔει πόλεων τῆς Συρίας ἐν πάσαις θεωρίας τε συντελῶν πολυτελεῖς καὶ τῶν Ἰοθδαίων τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους εἰς ἐπίδειξιν τῆς ἐαθτῶν ἀπωλείας ἀποχρώμενος...; Futrell 2006, 122.
[106] App., B Civ. 1.116.
[107] Wiedemann 1995, 105-7; Mann 2011, 88-9.
[108] Sen., Ep. 37.1; trans. R.M. Gummere: „Uri, vinciri ferroque necari."; Mann 2011, 88-90; Potter 2011, 261.

Despite their varying backgrounds, once admitted to a school, all gladiators had the same social status: they were considered *infames* and had submitted themselves to *infamia*. The legal meaning of this term is not fully understood, but it marked the person as partially excluded from the community because their profession was judged as dishonorable. As a result, they were not allowed to run for any public office nor permitted to vote or to even pay certain taxes. The status of gladiators was equal to that of actors, prostitutes, or any other profession where the body was submitted to the enjoyment of others. [109] In particular, *auctorati* were deemed venal because they were once free but had sold themselves. Even after regaining their freedom they had a lower status than before they became gladiators. Gladiators, however, held a higher status than did *bestiarii* and *venatores*.

Although the gladiators themselves were not of high status, their achievements and fighting abilities were greatly admired, and their legal status did not necessarily represent the reality of daily life. In an empire that had grown as a result of continual warfare, single combat was viewed as one of the most honorable endeavors. The fights demonstrated bravery, strength, agility, discipline, and courage to face and overcome death.[110] Gladiators functioned as *exempla* for those watching: they lived out virtues that the ancestors of the Romans were said to have demonstrated. Quintilian enumerates the qualities prominent in the stories of the forebears that virtuous male Romans should attempt to emulate:

> "But it is not only the content of such studies as these which we should know and constantly turn over in our minds; even more important are the records of the notable sayings and actions of the past… Could there be any better teachers of courage, justice, loyalty, self-control, frugality, or contempt for pain and death than men like Fabricius, Curius, Regulus, Decius, Mucius, and countless others?"[111]

[109] Futrell 2006, 130; Mann 2011, 91.
[110] Carter 1999, 38. See also the importance of *virtus*, *fortitudo*, and *disciplina* in stoic philosophy: Kroppen 2008.
[111] Quint., Inst. 12.2.29–30; trans. Russel: Neque ea solum quae talibus disciplinis continentur, sed magis etiam quae sunt tradita antiquitus dicta ac facta praeclare et nosse et animo semper agitare conveniet… An

Roman authors frequently describe historic fights in terms similar to gladiatorial encounters. For example, Virgil's description of the fight between Aeneas and Turnus as well as Livy's account of the combat between Titus Manlius and a huge Gaul remind us of descriptions of gladiatorial combats.[112] The similarities between virtues ascribed to Roman war heroes and gladiators demonstrate that gladiatorial combat was thought to be akin to Roman military skirmishes in values expressed. Thus, Carter argues that gladiators "demonstrated martial excellence." Furthermore, in that Roman wars were no longer immediately visible to the Roman people as they had been in the early Republic, Carter suggests that the viewing of gladiatorial combats "reinforced the ideology of military values in Roman society as a whole."[113]

The training that took place in the gladiatorial schools (*ludi*) was overseen by a trainer (*lanista*) as well as a doctor.[114] Inscriptions suggest that during this training gladiators were divided up into ranks, based on their abilities and experience. The ranking system ensured that the pairs were equally matched so that the fights were both fair and exciting. The system also defined the monetary value of the gladiator.[115] The training required gladiators to learn the many rules of combat as well as to become proficient in a particular fighting style, or *armatura*, of which about 20 different ones are known from antiquity (see Appendix I: Gladiatorial Types).

Eight fighting styles, of the twenty, are mentioned regularly in inscriptions and literature and are also illustrated in mosaics, wall paintings, and graffiti.[116] Rules regulated

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fortitudinem, iustitiam, fidem, continentiam, frugalitatem, contemptum doloris ac mortis melius alii docebunt quam Fabricii, Curii, Reguli, Decii, Mucii aliique innumerabiles?

[112] Verg., Aen. 10.443; see. Hardie 1986, 151-4; Livy, 7.10.6. trans. B.O. Foster; describes the historic fight thus: "They (Titus Manlius and the Gaul) then retired to their station, and the two armed men were left by themselves in the midst, like gladiators more than soliders…" – Recipiunt inde se ad stationem, et duo in medio armati spectaculi magis more quam lege belli destituuntur…; Carter 1999, 30.

[113] Carter 1999, 32.

[114] One of the best known ancient doctors, Galen, first worked as a doctor for gladiators in Pergamon before he was summoned to Rome as the doctor of the Marcus Aurelius; see Carter 2004, 42-3; Potter 2011, 265-6; Mattern 2013.

[115] Potter 2011, 262-4.

[116] See the list in Teyssier 2009, 9.

which fighting styles could be paired against each other so that the defensive and offensive capacities of each were evenly matched. All gladiators had weapons and defensive armor, which usually included a short sword, some type of a shield, and a helmet. Heads were fairly well protected, while the torso was often left bare except for a loin cloth tied around the waist. Depending on the size of the shield, gladiators could also wear greaves and arm guards. Some gladiators had very light armor, such as the *retiarius* who had a net, trident, and sword with a protective plate on his shoulder. He could thus move faster than his opponent, but he was not as well protected. The *retiarius* was usually paired with the heavily armed *secutor* who had a large rectangular shield, a sword, an arm-guard, and an egg-shaped helmet. The weight of his armor prevented the *secutor* from moving quickly.[117]

Gladiatorial fights ended when one of the fighters was no longer able to continue fighting, when both fighters were no longer able to fight, when the referee ended the game, or – in rare occasions – when the crowd interfered with the fight. Once a fighter gave up, the referee, the sponsor of the games, and the crowd decided on what to do with the defeated gladiator. If the gladiator had not shown enough spirit during the fight or somehow incurred the displeasure of the audience, the crowd might decide that he should be killed by his opponent. In order to maintain his honor, the gladiator had to submit to the crowd's decision.[118]

The reconstruction of gladiatorial types and fighting techniques has greatly relied on the analysis of images and chance discoveries of gladiatorial armor in combination with descriptions in Greek and Roman literature and epitaphs on burial monuments, especially those accompanied by images. The combined study of the sources has led to a fairly accurate reconstruction of most gladiatorial fighting styles, although the characteristics of some styles remain controversial.[119] In recent years Junkelmann has worked to refine our

[117] Carter 1999, 87-9; Junkelmann 2000a, 2002; Dodge 2011, 30-3; Junkelmann 2014. For a full list of gladiatorial styles with descriptions, see Appendix I: Gladiatorial Types.
[118] Laws and regulations regarding the treatment of gladiators and other performers were actually fairly strict as is shown in the preserved text discussed in: Potter and Mattingly 1999, 363-71.
[119] E.g. the *arbelas*: Carter 2001.

understanding of the different styles with the help of experiments that employ reconstructed armor, and the results are useful. For instance, it emerges that the arm guards used by the gladiators were necessary in order to avoid injury to the sword arm caused by the heavy shield rather than in order to protect against direct attacks.[120] Many of Junkelmann's reconstructions of gladiatorial accoutrements are based on the discovery of a large cache of armor in the amphitheater in Pompeii, along with random finds from other sites.[121] While his approach is very circumspect, other approaches to the reconstruction of the fighting styles have been less so. Most problematic are those that consider images as direct evidence of gladiatorial armor and attempt to reconstruct the developments of armor over time based on images in a variety of media. For example, Kazek studied lamp disks discovered in France in an attempt to describe the chronological development of several fighting styles. Lamp disks can be dated fairly well; however, Kazek assumes that the lamp disks illustrate only contemporary gladiatorial types.[122] It is important to take into consideration the likelihood that these images are views filtered by the experience and artistic ability of artisans, and that artists were drawing on stock images. As a result, many reconstructions of gladiatorial fighting types need to be viewed with caution.[123]

Gladiatorial entertainment embodied an inherent paradox: while the entertainment itself was a time-honored Roman tradition, the gladiators and other actors in the event were frequently not Roman. Moreover, gladiators belonged to the profession of public entertainers and were of low status as *infames*.[124] And yet, by facing an opponent in single combat, gladiators demonstrated highly admired Roman values. This paradox suggests that Romans valued this form of entertainment primarily for the skill and courage demonstrated

[120] Junkelmann 2000a, 54; see also Junkelmann 2000b, 2002, 2008.
[121] Junkelmann 2000a, 49; Jacobelli 2003; Teyssier 2009, 177-245 (very detailed analysis). It has been argued that the discovered armor was actually used during parades due to their ornate decoration, however, Junkelmann argues that the ornate decor fit the overall splendor and intended pompousness of a munus and conforms to the depictions of gladiators on oil lamps, mosaics, and wall painting.
[122] Kazek 2012; see also the discussion of the incorrect depiction of armor on the column of Trajan in chapter 3.
[123] E.g. several recent museum exhibitions on gladiators have displayed flashy rather than correct reconstructions, see Junkelmann 2014.
[124] Wiedemann 1992, 28-30; Mann 2011, 91.

by the gladiators and that they were less interested in the gladiators themselves. Certain gladiators found special favor with the spectators, but this was mainly determined by their fighting skill. Those who were less successful and were killed in gladiatorial combat were disregarded; they simply underscored the superior ability of the champion.

4. Public Engagement

As discussed earlier in this chapter, in Rome, the first gladiatorial fights were private gifts of influential people to the public in honor of a deceased family member. Gladiatorial combat, thus, had a private character and, in the Republic, developed into a political tool to win votes from the public. Its private nature meant that there was no overarching system in place that determined how the spectacles were organized. In the provinces the situation was similar throughout the late Republic and Empire. In some places, inscriptions do inform us about the structure of the games, especially during the Imperial period, but every province appears to have organized gladiatorial fights somewhat differently. In his dissertation, Carter studied the epigraphic evidence from the provinces of the Greek East and concluded that the majority of the combats from the 1st through 3rd centuries CE were organized by, or somehow connected to, the high priests of the Imperial cult.[125] The spectacles were not identical, and sometimes only included wild beast hunts or less expensive events. By the mid-2nd century CE Galen asserts that every high priest was expected to organize spectacles. It is unclear whether every high priest in the Greek East did, in fact, do this. Carter suggests that many did sponsor games without commemorating them with an inscription and that the inscriptions referring to such shows only document particularly extravagant or unique games.[126] The same epigraphic evidence also indicates that many of the high priests owned their own gladiators whom they then sold to the next

[125] Carter 1999, 216-7.

[126] Price 1984, 88-9; Carter 2004, 41-2; 61-2; Mann 2011, 72-3; 87. It must be kept in mind that only a small number of inscriptions have survived making it difficult to reconstruct epigraphic traditions, such as the commemoration of games through inscriptions, pers. comm. M. Steskal.

high priest in office. Galen recalls that he worked as doctor of the gladiators for five consecutive high priests in Pergamon.[127]

In the West there appears to have been a similar system in place in the late Republic and Imperial period, but there is little indication that it was as closely linked to one particular office as it was in the East. In his study of gladiatorial combat in the West, Ville suggests that the organization of the games was originally linked to a specific public office, but when these officials were no longer able to finance the games in the 1st century CE, wealthy local elites stepped in and began taking over.[128] Ville only discusses gladiatorial combat up to the time of Domitian. The financing system of the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE has not yet been given adequate study.

The organization of spectacles was not the duty only of individuals holding specific offices. Wealthy citizens might undertake sponsorship of spectacles and other entertainment. This was a favored form of euergetism throughout the Roman Empire. In addition to the abundant epigraphic evidence for games offered by Roman officials, there are also inscriptions that attest to the support of spectacular games by non-official wealthy citizens. For example, the family of the Vedii in Ephesos is known to have sponsored multiple games; fans referred to themselves as the "friends of the Vedii who love arms."[129] There were many different ways in which wealthy citizens could invest in their city – including the construction of aqueducts and of buildings, and the donation of grain or money. Zuiderhoek has shown that about eleven percent of all epigraphically attested donations for festivals and celebrations in Asia Minor went towards gladiatorial games.[130] The rewards for sponsorship were multifaceted: the sponsored events provided a particularly fast way of gaining the favor of large segments of the population, especially

[127] Mann 2011, 68-9.
[128] Ville 1981, 189-92; 224.
[129] Kalinowski 2002, 131-2: „φιλοβήδιοι φίλοπλοι"; Friesen 1999, 281.
[130] Zuiderhoek 2009, 88: uses statistics in a somewhat confusing manner since the number of inscriptions is limited and the identification of the inscriptions is ambiguous, as for example the division into wild beast hunts (7%) and gladiatorial games (11%) which could take place together, gladiatorial games could implicitly also include wild beast hunts; also, the temporal aspect is not respected in his analysis.

when combined with grain donations, and they put the sponsor in direct contact with the citizens of a town. The sponsor himself attended the games and sat in a position of honor, thereby ensuring that he was seen by as many spectators as possible.[131] Some of the most prominent sponsors of games were the emperors themselves. In the passage from the Res Gestae cited above, Augustus lists the number of games that he sponsored in his own name and in those of his sons or grandsons.[132] Likewise, Martial composed a series of epigrams commemorating the Imperial games organized by Titus, or possibly Domitian.[133] By imitating games sponsored by the emperors in Rome one could demonstrate an identification with Roman values and tradition. The organization of games also reinforced the superior social position of the elite organizers. Organizing games thus reinforced status, prestige, and legitimated the social position of the benefactors.[134]

It was long thought by scholars that gladiatorial combat was a less prominent form of entertainment in the Greek East than in the Latin West. This theory rested on two main points: the relative lack of amphitheaters in the East, and the assumption that people of Greek descent would not approve of such brutal and unsophisticated a custom as gladiatorial combat – a theory supported by the negative rhetoric used by a handful of Greek authors when describing spectacles. In 1940 Robert, the first to pay close attention to the gladiatorial inscriptions discovered in Asia Minor, pointed out that, contrary to the prevailing view, there is abundant evidence for the organization of gladiatorial games and

[131] See Plin., Pan. 33.2–3; transl. B. Radice: "What generosity went to provide this spectacle! And what impartiality the Emperor showed, unmoved as he was by personal feelings or else superior to them. Requests were granted, unspoken wishes were anticipated, and he did not hesitate to press us urgently to make fresh demands; yet still there was something new to surpass our dreams. How freely too the spectators could express their enthusiasm and show their preferences without fear! No one risked the old charge of impiety if he disliked a particular gladiator; no spectator found himself turned spectacle, dragged off by the hook to satisfy grim pleasures, or else cast to the flames!" – Quam deinde in edendo liberalitatem, quam iustitiam exhibuit omni adfectione aut intactus aut maior! Impetratum est quod postulabatur, oblatum quod non postulabatur. Institit ultro et ut concupisceremus admonuit, ac sic quoque plura inopinata plura subita. Iam quam libera spectantium studia, quam securus favor! Nemini impietas ut solebat obiecta, quod odissed gladiatorem; nemo e spectatore spectaculum factus miseras voluptates unco et ignibus expiavit.
[132] Augustus, Res Gestae 22; see Cooley 2009, 84-5.
[133] Coleman 2006, lix.
[134] Veyne 1988, 333; Zuiderhoek 2007, 200 -3, 2009, 9; 85-7; see also Gunderson 1996, 115; 49, 115; 149.

spectacles in Asia Minor.[135] Most recently, both Mann and Carter have convincingly argued that only a few Greek authors actually speak negatively of gladiatorial combat.[136] They point out that even these comments were not directed against gladiatorial combat but rather against the combats that took place in the theater of Dionysos in Athens, and further, that these authors were also opposed to entertainment in general. As a result, Mann places very little value on these remarks and instead suggests that gladiatorial combat was an event with which the Greeks could readily identify.[137] The contests embodied many virtues prized in Greek culture, and it was not unlike athletic competitions. The gladiators sometimes even tried to evoke mythical Greek heroes by adopting such names as Heracles or Ajax.

The enjoyment of gladiatorial games in Rome is evocatively described by Martial who not only described the different shows offered during the games but also gave an impression of the ethnic range of the spectators that eagerly attended the games in Rome:

> "…The Arab has come hurrying, the Sabaei have come hurrying, and here the Cilicians have been sprayed with their own mist. The Sugambri have come with their hair curled in a knot, and the Ethiopians with their hair curled in another way. The speech of the peoples sounds different and yet, when you are hailed as the true father of the fatherland (pater patriae = the emperor = the sponsor), they all then speak as one."[138]

By enumerating peoples from different parts of the Empire who attended the games, Martial alludes to the great cultural diversity of the Roman Empire, united by a

[135] Robert 1940, 1950.
[136] Carter 2009, 301-3; 14; Mann 2011, 111-25; Carter 2014.
[137] Mann 2011, 115-23; 33-34.
[138] See Coleman 2006, 37. Mart., Spect. 3: festinauit Arabs, festinauere Sabaei,/et Cilices nimbis hic maduere suis./crinibus in nodum tortis uenere Sugambri,/atque aliter tortis crinibus Aethiopes./ uox diuersa sonat populorum, tum tamen una est,/cum uerus patriae diceris esse pater.

common enjoyment of the games and an appreciation of the sponsor, the *pater patriae*, who was in this case possibly Titus.[139]

Many Roman authors mention the widespread popularity of the gladiatorial games in Rome. Although there is less literary evidence for the provinces, some epigraphic evidence points towards a great appreciation of gladiatorial combat, such as is indicated by the title used by the fans of the Vedii – "friends of the Vedii who love arms." Archaeological evidence, long neglected, further supports the view that the gladiatorial games were popular across the Roman Empire. Ubiquitous finds include terracotta figurines of gladiators, lamps, and glass cups with gladiatorial motifs. They have been discovered in both private and public contexts, and graffiti can be found on many interior and exterior walls of houses.[140] The Terrace House 2 in Ephesos for example boasts at least 4 graffiti and 10 fragments of terracotta gladiator figurines and lamps, while in the West large collections of glass cups with gladiatorial scenes have been discovered.[141] The large number of objects referencing gladiatorial combat gives a sense of intense public engagement with the *munera* on all social levels.[142]

It is unclear how regularly and on what scale gladiatorial games were offered.[143] The games in Rome operated on a larger scale than anywhere else in the Empire, and Mann suggests that the *munera* in the provincial *metropoleis* of Asia, the Galliae, the Hispaniae, or Africa Proconsularis were comparable in size.[144] As for frequency, the epigraphic evidence leads Carter to conclude that a high priest only offered one spectacle while in office for a

[139] Coleman 2006, 38-42: the author collates numerous sources that indicate that spectacles were broadly advertised and attended by people out of town.
[140] See the collections on display in many museums, such as the British Museum, Alte Museum in Berlin, Archaeological Museum in Cologne, etc.; e.g. Bailey and Miller 1980; Sennequier and Arveiller-Dulong 1998.
[141] Graffiti: Langner 2001, Cat. Nr. 788, 1015, 1102; Thür et al. 2005, 132; terracotta: Thür et al. 2005, 406; Krinzinger 2010, 349; 679-80.
[142] See also Kayser's assessment of Egypt: Kayser 2000, 465: based on the large number of unique gladiatorial images on lamps of local clay, he suggests that Egyptians greatly enjoyed the games.
[143] Gladiatorial combat has been most extensively studied in the Greek east where the epigraphic evidence abounds. Thus, the picture is skewed towards the east.
[144] Mann 2011, 68.

year.[145] Therefore it appears that a provincial city in the 2nd century that had an appropriate venue celebrated games at least once a year. The frequency probably would have varied across the Empire and must have changed over time. Based on the construction of new amphitheaters, appearance of mosaics, and tombstones, Mann suggests that spectacles became more prominent, and perhaps more frequent, in the 2nd to 3rd century CE.[146] It seems that in some places gladiatorial spectacles followed an annual calendar of events, while in others the *munera* took place at different times during the year.[147] Gladiatorial inscriptions from Beroia are dated to the same day in different years, but according to Galen gladiatorial games occurred in Pergamon at different times of the year. There is, therefore, little evidence to suggest that spectacles took place on the same day across the entire Roman Empire. The inscriptions mention traveling troupes of gladiators[148] that could be hired for games and likely knew when gladiatorial combats took place and where. Likewise, the passage from Martial mentioned above indicates that spectators traveled to visit spectacles. If they took place at different times during the year it would have been possible for people to visit spectacles in neighboring cities in addition to those taking place in their own cities. For example graffiti have been discovered in Pompeii advertising games in other towns, and inscriptions in the amphitheater of Lyon identify seats reserved for delegations from other parts of Gaul.[149]

Gladiatorial games straddled a fine line in Roman society: they were privately funded and only periodically bound to an office, but, at the same time, the games were expected by the public and necessary for an advancing political career. The evidence discussed above suggests that the games were organized somewhat differently in each province but were often connected with the office of the high priest. It is likely that the *munera* took place at least once a year, depending on the city and the affluence of its

[145] Carter 2009, 217-8.
[146] Mann 2011, 54.
[147] See the recent discovery of letters of Hadrian and the reconstructed festival cycle by Potter, in Potter and Mattingly 1999, 353.
[148] Mann 2011, 108-9; Potter 2011, 301.
[149] Coleman 2006, 38-42.

inhabitants. In contrast to earlier views, it is now accepted that games were presented across the entire Roman Empire and enjoyed by the broad public. While the games were an expensive endeavor for a sponsor, they were beneficial to both the sponsor and the public: they reinforced social status, making it possible for local elites to maintain their status within the Roman social system, and they helped politically-minded individuals to gain popularity quickly. Likewise, the public was able to engage directly with the donor, enjoy the games, and possibly receive donations of grain.

5. Gladiators and Death

Death is inextricably linked to the topic of gladiatorial combat and has long attracted the attention of scholars and the public.[150] Modern scholars' responses to gladiatorial combat range between disgust and attraction. The idea of fighting for the entertainment of spectators is perceived by some as cruel and savage while others see it as a public display of courage occasionally leading to death. Some scholars prefer to focus on the reason behind staged violence and killing, while other scholars are more interested in the organization of *munera*, avoiding the topic of death altogether. Our perception of gladiatorial combat has been influenced by the many ways in which it is portrayed in popular media, which emphasize the brutality and mortality of the sport but fail to recognize the extensive training and skill needed to perform.[151] Our modern perceptions of death and violence, therefore, complicate the study of gladiatorial combat and ancient spectacle making it more difficult to understand the ancient reasons behind a custom that seems foreign and repugnant to us today.

The popular imagination often envisions two possible scenarios for the killing of gladiators. A gladiator was either killed in combat, or he was killed by demand of the audience. The evidence for the killing of gladiators in the arena is sparse, but Carter has used inscriptions to reconstruct the rules of combat, including two different types of

[150] See Fagan 2011, 13-22.
[151] E.g. the Gladiator school in Trier: http://www.gladiatoren-schule.de. Some sites use gladiators for marketing purposes although there is no evidence for gladiators at the particular site, e.g. Villa Borg by Trier.

combat: the fight *ad digitum* or the fight "for their lives". Based on Martial's description, the fight *ad digitum* ended when one of the gladiators surrendered by lifting a finger or by throwing down his shield. In this case the *munerarius* functioned as the judge of the combat and selected the winner. His decision was swayed by the audience who signaled their approval of the fight with hand signals.[152] The fight "for their lives" or fight to death is problematic, because the inscriptions suggest that such a fight required imperial permission.[153]

Many scholars have tried to understand the role of death in gladiatorial combats in the context of Roman society. Studies of gladiatorial combat in the 1980's and 1990's by such scholars as Hopkins, Brown, and Futrell subscribed to the theory that Roman society in general was dominated by violence and war.[154] From Hopkins' perspective, gladiatorial games were simply outlets for violent energy of spectators who became agents of violence, and therefore gladiatorial combat should be interpreted as a form of communal human sacrifice. Futrell, following in Hopkins' footsteps, compares gladiatorial combat to human sacrifice in other cultures, focusing on the element of publicly-sanctioned killing. She argues that the importance of death in gladiatorial combat for Roman society was the element of joint killing that could have a cathartic effect on the spectators.[155] Although Futrell makes a plausible argument for the purpose served by killing in gladiatorial combats, she never actually gives an estimate for the number of fatal fights, nor does she consider how the deaths would have occurred. Her argument illustrates a confusion common in discussions of death and gladiatorial combat. Such arguments fail to consider that gladiatorial combat was only one part of the entire *munus*. In comparison to the other events that took place in the course of a *munus*, the gladiatorial fights were likely the event that resulted in the least number of fatalities and bloodshed. It was also the only event where typically two fairly evenly matched opponents faced each other. Thus, in my view, other elements of a *munus*,

[152] Potter 1999, 340, 2011, 264: the exact hand signals (thumbs-up or thumbs-down) are debated.
[153] See Carter 2006, 99-100; Potter and Mattingly 1999, 331
[154] Hopkins 1983, 1-30; esp. 5; Brown 1992, 180-211; Futrell 1997.
[155] Futrell 1997, 48.

such as the execution of criminals, would more appropriately be interpreted as a form of communal human sacrifice.

The visual images often portray death by showing gladiators who are in the process of losing, or have already lost in single combat. In an essay entitled "Death as Decoration" Brown employs the depictions of death in images of spectacles as evidence that Romans did not perceive death in the same way as we do today. She contends that the imagery found in houses simply documents the approval of the games by the home owners, and she further concludes that the games were frequently fatal to gladiators.[156] Brown does not, however, consider the available images in their entirety: images of dying gladiators also include victorious gladiators. Therefore, the same composition can be interpreted as a depiction of death or of victory.

Wiedemann places the issue of overcoming death and fighting for one's life at the center of his argument. He does consider death to have been a quintessential aspect of gladiatorial combat, but, instead of focusing on the act of "dying," he draws attention to the gladiator's struggle to live. He takes this observation further and suggests that by defeating their opponents in the arena the gladiators overcame death. Wiedemann likens the defeat of an opponent to the rebirth of the gladiator as a more honorable individual – or hero – which sometimes even led to the gladiator's release, the *missio*.[157]

Although death is frequently a component of discussions about gladiatorial combat, actual statistics and factual information about the death of gladiators are more elusive. Ville was the first to give estimates for the fatalities resulting from gladiatorial games. He estimated that one in five fights ended in death in the 1st century CE, and that by the 2nd and 3rd century this number might have risen to one in two fights. These numbers have since been cited by Mann, Carter, and other authors.[158] However, Ville's estimates are based on the number of occurrences of death in the known gladiatorial images on mosaics.

[156] Brown 1992, 180-211.
[157] Wiedemann 1992, 1995, 145-59.
[158] Ville 1981, 318-20; Mann 2011, 104.

Since Ville's study, however, many of the images have been redated and more images have been discovered. The currently known mosaics provide no evidence to suggest that the depictions of death statistically correlate with the number of actual deaths.

Epigraphical evidence for the death of gladiators is found especially on tombstones. These, however, provide a heavily skewed picture of the mortality rates of gladiators since tombstones were not set up for all gladiators. Gladiators who were killed early on in their career, who were less successful in their profession, or who did not have anyone to erect a tombstone for them do not appear in this corpus of evidence. Moreover, not all tombstones survive, of course, stone is always able to be reworked and reused. Based on his reading of the epigraphic evidence, Mann has suggested that younger, less experienced gladiators were more likely to die during their first combats while the older a gladiator became the more likely he was to survive the fight.[159] Thus, there can be no reliable statistics on mortality rates of gladiators.

Some textual evidence refers to gladiators and death, such as the treatises of Galen who prides himself on the fact that no gladiator he treated died during the five years that he was doctor for the gladiators of Pergamon:

> "Fortunately, while many (gladiators) died in the previous years, under me neither did any of the wounded die, … nor (did any die) from any other wound, and the second high priest — after the medical treatment had been entrusted to me (by the first) — did likewise and also entrusted the care of the gladiators to me seven and a half months later. For the first served as high priest around the fall, and the second in high spring. Again, with all saved, after him the third and the fourth and fifth likewise entrusted the medical treatment of the gladiators to me, so that I had abundant testing of my training."[160]

[159] Mann 2011, 105-6.

[160] Carter 2004, 43; Gal., Comp. Med. 3.2; trans. M.J. Carter: κατὰ δὲ πολλῶν τεθνεώτων ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἔτεσιν, ἐμοῦ δὲ ὔτε τῶν ὡς εἴρηται τετρωμένων ἀποθανόντος τινὸς οὔτ'ἐξ ἄλλου τραύματος, ὁ μετὰ τὸν ἐγχειρίσαντά μοι τότε τὴν θεραπείαν δεύτερος ἀρχιερεύς, ὁμοίως καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπίστεθσε τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῶν

Although this passage has been interpreted to mean that no gladiators died, Galen is likely not referring to the gladiators who were killed (and not simply wounded) in the arena. This passage, therefore, does not provide any further information about death rate among gladiators. It does, however, indicate another danger of the gladiatorial profession – death through the improper care of wounds. Many gladiators probably died outside of the arena as a result of infections and complications in the treatment of their injuries. Grosschmidt and Kanz analyzed skeletal remains of a possible gladiator cemetery on the outskirts of Ephesos. Their preliminary reports refer to individuals with injuries that had healed to varying degrees. The ossuary remains do not, however, indicate whether the injuries were accompanied by infections leading to death. It seems safe to assume, though, that many gladiators were not killed on the demand of the audience, but that they died as a result of wounds sustained during combat.[161]

Financial reasons might also have played a role in the number of deaths that occurred during the gladiatorial fight. Gladiators were very expensive, because they had to pass through years of training before they were able to enter the arena. When a gladiator did not survive a fight, the loss increased the overall expense of the games substantially. To make his games particularly memorable, surpass previous games, and demonstrate his generosity the sponsor of games could choose to allow more gladiators to be killed, as is shown by inscriptions from Beroia.[162] One of these from the mid-3rd century indicates that, with imperial approval, a gladiator was killed on each day of the *munus*.

μονομάχων μετὰ μῆνας ἑπτὰ μέσους. ὁ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτος περὶ τὴν φθινοπωρινὴν ἰσημερίαν, ὁ δὲ δεύτερος ἀκμάζοντος τοῦ ἦρος ἠρχιερεύσατο. Πάλιν δ’ἐπὶ τούτῳ σωθέντων ὁ τρίτος καὶ ὁ τέταρτος καὶ πέμπτος ὡσαύτος ἐνεχείρισάν μοι τὴν θεραπείαν τῶν μονομάχων, ὥστε πολλὴν βάσανον ἔχειν τῆς ἀγωγῆς.

[161] *Gladiatoren in Ephesos: Tod am Nachmittag. Eine Ausstellung im Ephesos Museum Selcuk* 2002, 43-8; Kanz and Grossschmidt 2006; Potter 2011, 267-8; Lösch et al. 2014. A definitive final report has not been published to date. Although many of the injuries do suggest that the individuals performed in *munera*, it is possible that some of the individuals were not gladiators and instead were killed in other events during the *munera*. The high number of head injuries is inconsistent with depictions and caricatures of gladiators who are always shown with characteristic helmets.

[162] See Carter 1999, 234; Mann 2011, 105: the inscriptions demonstrate that the games became more elaborate over a time period of ten years (229-240 CE). The final inscription notes that by imperial approval a gladiator was killed on each day of the *munus*.

It is clear that death was an ever present possibility in gladiatorial combats and even more so in a *munus*. Numerous ancient authors, such as Quintilian and Pliny, mention death in their comments on *munera*, but they advise their readers to scorn death: "… (spectacles) inspire them (the spectators) to face honorable wounds and look scorn on death, by exhibiting love of glory and desire for victory even in the persons of criminals and slaves."[163] As discussed above, modern disgust for violent killing has led to an overestimate of the frequency of fatalities resulting from gladiatorial fights. While gladiatorial fights often did lead to death, the gladiators were not always killed on the demand of the spectators. Instead, the fighters frequently died in combat or later of their wounds. The high price to replace a killed gladiator would have also been a likely deterrent in killing large numbers of gladiators at once. Instead of simply viewing the gladiatorial combats as bloody and violent events, we must view them within the context of different forms of death within the entire *munus*. When compared with the other events that commonly took place during a *munus*, the gladiatorial combat, fought between highly trained individuals, would have been one of the events least marked by death: criminals were killed at large munera (*damnati ad ludos*) and animals were slayed in their thousands, simply let into the arena and then hunted down. Providing the high point of a *munus*, the gladiators had to demonstrate skill, strength, and courage in order to beat their opponent. The skillfulness of the gladiators and the even chance for victory that both adversaries had, set gladiatorial combat apart from the other events of the *munus*, which celebrated killing. Although death and killing is often at the forefront of discussions of gladiatorial combat and the *munus*, ancient viewers might well have focused on other aspects: the fight, namely the "exhibition of love of glory and the desire for victory," as Pliny claims.[164]

[163] Plin., Pan. 33; trans. B. Radice: …sed quod animos virorum molliret et frangeret, sed quod ad pulchra vulnera contemptumque mortis accenderet, cum in servorum etiam noxiorumque corporibus amor laudis et cupido victoriae cerneretur. See also Potter 1999, 330-1.
[164] Plin., Pan. 33, trans. B. Radice.

6. Conclusion

Munera played an important role in the politics of the Roman Empire over a long period of time. Although their origin is debated, spectacles developed into a tradition that quickly gained popularity in the areas conquered by the Romans. They became regular events widely celebrated by the 1st century BCE and lost prominence when the administration of the Roman Empire changed in the 4th and 5th century CE. The close connection between the prosperity of the Roman Empire and the *munera* makes them one of the cultural forms that can be truly referred to as "Roman."

Gladiatorial combats and other events of the *munus* were useful in demonstrating certain virtues, such as strength, fearlessness in the face of death, and discipline – all considered to be quintessentially Roman. At the same time, because of their low social status, gladiators and other performers did not pose a threat to the society, even after they had regained their freedom. On many levels the *munera* were a means of demonstrating Roman power. Gladiators reminded observers of soldiers in their training and fighting practices. The animal displays and hunts, for their part, depended on the organizational ability to capture and transport wild animals, which, in addition underscored both Roman superiority over nature and the reach of their Empire. Likewise, executions were a sign of Roman power over people who did not submit to Roman rule. The execution of prisoners-of-war in the course of *munera* alluded to Roman military victory and dominance over other cultures.[165]

Spectacles also reinforced the social structure of the Roman Empire in multiple ways: seating in the arenas was organized by social rank, thus ensuring that people of equal status were seated together and making mobility between ranks appear nearly impossible.[166] Furthermore, the sponsorship of games strengthened the social standing of the patron who demonstrated his wealth, his ability to acquire certain exotic animals, and

[165] Wiedemann 1992, 46; Carter 1999, 40; see Ville 1981, 391-3.
[166] Gunderson 1996, 123-6; Revell 2009, 167-72.

his adherence to Roman traditions. The sponsor also directly communicated with the people in the context of the arena by fulfilling their desire for entertainment.

Death was a necessary part of the games because it enabled those performing in the spectacles to exhibit their courage and strength. Some of the events included more bloodshed than others, the gladiatorial combats probably being the least deadly of all of them. There were several reasons for this. Gladiators were very expensive: their fights followed strict rules; and a gladiator could be declared winner due to his superior skill, or if his opponent gave up. This is not to say that gladiators were not killed in the arena. However, death was not as frequent an outcome as is sometimes implied. Death by audience demand was even less frequent than death by injury or later complications.

By highlighting the role of images in the reconstruction of the nature of the *munus*, it is possible to demonstrate that Roman spectacle is not as well understood as might be thought. Images have often been drawn into the discussion when all other sources have been exhausted. However, they are often treated as historically accurate documents, without considering that they are abstractions, dependent upon the production mechanisms or purposes that many of them served. For images of *munera* to be valuable sources of information they have to be treated in relation to the craft traditions that produced them. While such images are commonly interpreted as reminders of the spectacles that the owner of the house once sponsored,[167] mosaics and wall paintings of gladiators and *venatores* were probably not simply reminders of past euergetism. They probably had deeper underlying messages, as I argue in the following chapters.

[167] This was first stated by Dunbabin 1978, 68-9; 85; see also Brown 1992, 183.

Chapter 3: The Visual Record. Depicting Entertainment and Spectacle

The compositions of images of spectacle as well as the individual figures within them were based on conventions that were drawn upon repeatedly across time and space throughout the entire Roman Empire. In this chapter I will discuss both the compositional and the figural types and consider the way these elements affected the visual experience of viewers examining scenes of the *munus* within an architectural context. As will be shown, compositions were made with the viewer in mind and images conveyed an array of messages about the patron and his family. Ancient artists did not continually invent new ways of illustrating these messages but drew on established compositional schemes in the creation of new mosaics and wall paintings. Some compositions are more prevalent in certain regions of the Roman Empire, and these images provide information on workshop practices.

While similarities in whole compositions have garnered little attention, scholars have often ascribed certain similarities among figural images in depictions of the *munus* to the reliance of artists on pictorial types. These suggestions have never been fully investigated in the context of spectacle imagery, and testing this hypothesis is one of the aims of this chapter. By exploring the use of such types existed, I will test the assumptions of earlier scholars and provide a basis for further research on artistic practices. By identifying common visual formulas it is possible to highlight elements that do not conform to these expectations. In many cases unusual characteristics suggest that patrons or artists adapted image types to express an intended message or to fit the decor of a specific room. These unusual characteristics provide the basis for discerning the artist's or patron's intended message. Understanding workshop practices and the visual conventions of the time is essential to interpreting the images. I hope to demonstrate that the images should not be approached as if they were intended to be historically accurate snapshots of

spectacles but rather in the understanding that the images are artistic constructs that employ conventions, and their development resulted from complex artistic processes.[168]

First, I will discuss the composition of the mosaics and wall paintings in question and then identify figural types within them. Although the images followed specific compositional structures, each image proves to be unique in the selection and arrangement of figures. The individual figures appear to have been selected from a limited repertoire of stock types. In this chapter I establish that these images are not literal representations of spectacles, but rather I show that artists drew upon a limited number of widely used compositional formats and figure types. One of the few mosaics that claims to represent a specific spectacle, the Magerius Mosaic from Smirat, Tunisia (Cat.Nr.13), features prominently in discussions of the commemoration of spectacles by patrons who sponsored them. I offer a critique of the arguments of earlier scholarly interpretations of the Magerius Mosaic by analyzing its compositional elements along with the extensive inscription that accompanies the image. I will try to demonstrate that the mosaic offers one individual's perception of a particular event even though the composition and figures are based on a visual vocabulary that was known throughout the Roman Empire.

1. Compositions

Differences in pictorial composition among images on like themes are commonly attributed to stylistic developments and linked to absolute chronologies.[169] However, especially when dealing with mosaics, the study of stylistic development is complicated by the fact that some were in use over long periods of time and also that the mosaics reveal a variety of regional differences. Mosaic floors are among the most durable and continuously used surfaces of a house. As a result, they were less affected by continual changes in fashion than were wall paintings. The dating of mosaics is even more difficult when the archaeological contexts are no longer known or are imprecise. Nevertheless, mosaics are a

[168] E.g. Tuck 2014, 423: "The presumption of the action images is that of a snapshot of an event, overwhelmingly a specific rather than generic one."
[169] See esp. Lavin 1963, 179-283.

very useful form of evidence as their survival rate is far better than that of other decorated surfaces in Roman domestic spaces. The corpus of extant Roman mosaics comprises examples from the entire Roman Empire while wall paintings have been recovered from relatively few sites, such as Ostia, Pompeii, and Ephesos. Although the dating of mosaics is difficult, their large number and wider distribution make it possible to address other issues, such as regionality.[170] Thus, instead of viewing different compositional schemes in the light of chronological developments that took place simultaneously across the Roman Empire, I break down the corpus into regions and focus on regional developments rather than issues around dating the images.

Images of spectacle from the Roman Empire can be divided into three basic decorative forms.[171] The first has been referred to as all-over-design and describes a single, large-scale animated image. In this type of composition figures are arranged haphazardly and open spaces between them are filled in.[172] In the second compositional type the individual scenes of the spectacle are arranged in a long continuous border frieze, while in the third the scenes are broken down into small vignette-like figural groups. The compositions are frequently surrounded by complex geometric frameworks and continuous geometric borders.[173] The compositions often follow a strict grid that structures all the images within it. They also tend to reflect the shape of the room.

While the frieze- and vignette-style compositions appear in other media as well, the all-over-type composition is typically found only in floor mosaics and takes advantage of the compositional possibilities of its placement on the floor. The figures are generally not aligned according to a single base line but instead are strewn across the entire space so that the image must be viewed from multiple angles in order to see it in its entirety. All-over-compositions commonly show the various stages of a spectacle and sometimes contain a depiction of the entertainment venue as well. Such images – referred to by some scholars

[170] See also Muth 1998, 75-9, 90-8; Scheibelreiter 2011, 43-4.
[171] Terms according to Lavin 1963, 206.
[172] Lavin 1963, 212-6: first used this term and it has since continued to be used by e.g. Clarke 1979, 6.
[173] For an overview of the geometric border schemes, see Salies 1974, 48-72; Schmelzeisen 1992, 36-45.

as carpet-style[174] – are unusual owing to their use of birds'-eye perspective and a desire to cover large floors. Two examples of this type of mosaic are the Magerius Mosaic in Smirat (Cat.Nr.13) and the *damnatio ad bestias* mosaic in the Sollertiana Domus in El Djem (Cat.Nr.7).[175]

Vignette and frieze compositions contain scenes related to standard depictions of one-on-one armed encounters of gladiators that can be found in other media, including lamp disks and other small objects, and in all periods.[176] Although the vignettes and friezes feature many of the same scenes as the large all-over-compositions, they usually do not include any indication of the entertainment venue. They are solely focused on the figures. Vignettes were described by Lavin, as "restricted, self-contained, illusionistic 'scenes'"[177]; they images are often also called *emblemata*.[178] They are adaptable, can easily be used in large and small scale compositions, and occur frequently. Good examples of this type of mosaics are found in Nennig (Cat.Nr.43) and in Reims (Cat.Nr.46). In contrast to vignette compositions, the frieze compositions often appear within frames or dividing elements in larger mosaic floors. Friezes are usually composed of multiple independent figural groups that are set in a long row.[179] The arrangement of these groups in friezes can construct a narrative that follows the sequence of events at a spectacle. One of the most prominent examples of this type is the mosaic from Zliten (Cat.Nr.18). Although the smaller size of the figural groups and their location in a framing border make the images less visually prominent than those in other types of spectacle compositions, frieze-compositions frequently include more scenes.

[174] See Kondoleon 1995, 288; Dunbabin 1999, 53, 219, 342; see also Lavin 1963, 216 who differentiates between birds-eye and carpet-style designs, using the latter term to refer to mosaics with floral arabesques.
[175] This format is typical of circus images, see Humphrey 1986, 177; Bergmann 2008.
[176] As for example armed encounters on the column of Trajan in Rome or athletes in Greek vase painting.
[177] Lavin 1963, 223.
[178] The term *emblema* has many connotations and is often associated with mosaics from Hellenistic/Greek contexts that were prefabricated and sold separately as works of art. Since it is not always clear whether the mosaics included in this corpus were all prefabricated, I prefer to call these small individual images "vignettes".
[179] See also Lavin 1963, 226-9.

References to the setting of the games, namely the arena, and to natural elements, such as rocks and trees, are typically found in all-over designs, scattered around the figural groups. These references have proved misleading because they give the impression that the mosaicist wished to show a specific moment during the games or a very specific venue. These images, however persuasively "real," are in most cases composites that include multiple scenes from different moments in the games and use generic elements. A good example is the Magerius Mosaic (Cat.Nr.13) in which venatores are shown in the process of killing multiple leopards while the herald stands in the arena already holding the reward for the victors. The inscription on the mosaic describes the sequence of events and mentions that Magerius came forward and offered a reward higher than the one demanded by the *venatores* after the slaughter of the leopards. All-over designs make no attempt to give a sense of real time. Instead, they combine the most exciting and essential elements of a spectacle in a single image.[180] The simultaneous depiction of events gives us a sense of the events that were perceived as important for the audience's understanding of the image. The natural elements simply act as a backdrop, filling the empty spaces and providing some context for figures and events.

References to the venue or to a natural setting are not as common in friezes and vignette designs as they are in all-over designs, and when they occur they function differently. Trees or similar natural elements are occasionally used in friezes to separate individual scenes and to group figures, but they do not necessarily act as a backdrop to the figural scene. Rather than seeming to be embedded in a natural setting, the individual figures in a frieze operate independently: they are the focus of attention and variations in size draws attention to certain groups. In vignette compositions variation in the scale from image to image effectively highlights the most exciting events and indicates a preference for certain spectacle events over others. This is clearly demonstrated by the Nennig Mosaic (Cat.Nr.43) in which animals are shown alongside humans in individual vignettes, but the

[180] This is a practice particularly common in circus images. Here the beginning, highlights, and winner of the race are frequently all shown in a single image, see Humphrey 1986; Bergmann 2008, 362.

vignette containing the actual encounter between two gladiators is larger than all the others. The fighters are shown in greater detail than all the others, marking these gladiators as the main attraction. At the same time this gladiatorial vignette clearly declares the subject matter of the entire floor, namely the *munus*.

The viewer's experience of these different compositional types must have resulted in different kinds of engagement. The viewing experience depends on the size of the image and its orientation and placement within a room. Floor mosaics offer a particularly large range of possibilities. The vertical placement of wall paintings allows the viewer to engage with the image along a single vertical axis, and the baseline of the image is usually parallel to the floor. In contrast, the horizontal alignment of floor mosaics requires viewing from multiple angles. R. Molholt's recent study of viewer engagement with floor mosaics concludes that mosaics can function as highly interactive images, requiring the viewer to move across the floor in order to activate the narrative.[181] This is particularly true for the large all-over compositions which require a viewer to make a complete pass around the room to gain a full sense of it. The individual figures are dispersed across the entire floor and are oriented in different directions. However, some all-over compositions are purposely arranged to be viewed from one particular viewpoint. Vignette-style compositions vary: some are arranged so that all vignettes are oriented in one direction. In other instances the vignettes are arranged in a circular pattern, requiring the viewer to walk around the entire room to view each one. Frieze-compositions usually appear along the borders of rooms or surrounding large images and their figures are smaller than those in other compositional schemes. Their size and function as a frame make it necessary for viewers to come closer in order to see the details of the image.

The composition of these images is closely tied to the function of the room. Mosaics could guide viewers through a room and either entice them to enter and walk around or cause them to stop at the door. The T-zone of the *triclinium* mosaics had a particularly important function in this respect. It could underscore social hierarchies by orienting the

[181] Lavin 1963; Molholt 2008, 3-16.

main figural groups towards the places of honor. It is therefore necessary to consider functional aspects of a room that directly informed design choices.[182]

Another aspect of spectacle images to consider is the narrative element. Different compositions diverge greatly in their structuring of the design. Frieze compositions offer a straightforward narrative structure consisting of multiple figural groups set in a row, suggesting the passage of time. Here the viewer only needs to decide whether to view the frieze from the left to right or right to left. The individual vignettes in vignette compositions frequently follow a certain circular pattern, but the figural groups are placed in such a way as to balance the entire composition visually rather than follow the actual progression of events. Viewers have the freedom to put the images together in their minds in whatever sequence they wish and thus to compose their own narratives. The process of constructing a story line could be affected by other factors, such as the size of the vignettes in proportion to one another. For example the larger size of the gladiatorial scene in the mosaic in Nennig informs the viewer that it is the most important image of the floor. All-over designs provide the least amount of direction for viewing the image. The lack of borders or dividing elements gives the impression of simultaneous action. The benefit of an all-over design is that the composition can include visual references to the setting and the audience of the games even if it cannot help the viewer to construct a narrative progression in the same way as a frieze. The all-over composition of the Magerius Mosaic employs text to direct the viewer's understanding of the narrative. However, this solution is unique to this mosaic. It is the most flexible type of composition and in most cases the viewer is left to create his or her own narrative.

The Magerius Mosaic is not the only composition to include text. In most cases inscriptions simply provide the names of animals and fighters and letters marking the loser or winner of a fight. In rare cases there are longer texts, but these are limited to naming the successful fighter and possibly mentioning a sponsor. One of the longest texts, the one on the aforementioned Magerius Mosaic includes a description of the event and the positive

[182] Muth 1998, 61-3.

response of the audience to Magerius' munificence. This inscription appears to have been added as an afterthought: it is squeezed in between figures, and the letters diminish in size in order to fit the size. The text is a vital part of this mosaic, even if the visual components are the primary focus of the composition.

In the mosaic compositions, depth is often only hinted at by including simple shadows. Most images show the fighters and animals facing each other on a single base line, and the fighters are depicted in profile, without much sense of depth. Some images include referees who are set back and placed on a higher base line than the fighters. One image from Leptis Magna (Cat.Nr.10), which does not follow this rule, stands out for its portrayal of depth by means of perspectival foreshortening. In this mosaic a *secutor*, sitting on the ground after defeating a *retiarius*, is shown in strict profile, but he looks at the corpse of the *retiarius* shown lying diagonally on the ground. The figures are set on a white background and a brown stripe at the bottom of the image indicates the arena floor. The weapons of the gladiators appear to be floating in mid-air between the two gladiators. The dead *retiarius'* body receded into space and creates a sense of depth. Although it is placed off-center, in the right half of the image, the eye is drawn towards his dead body through the use of this pictorial device.

The three compositional types described here are by no means restricted to images of spectacle; however, these formats appear to have been considered particularly effective for portraying these entertainments. Artists and patrons could choose the compositional type that best suited the shape and function of a room. All-over designs were most effective for giving a sense of the setting and context; friezes were better able to convey a narrative; and vignettes provided an easy way of highlighting the favorite parts or most important events of a spectacle. The choice of composition was influenced by the intended message. Images of spectacles did not generate meaning simply through figures they depicted. Their intended messages were enhanced through the arrangement of the individual elements. By analyzing the compositional schemes we can gain a greater understanding of the way the images functioned. The mosaics were products of skilled craftsmen that served as vehicles

for conveying messages about the patron's identity, value system, and status. They were not snapshots of actual events.[183]

2. Figure Types

Numerous scholars have pointed out that artists only drew on a limited repertoire of compositional schemes when creating an image and a similarly confined range of stock types when depicting individual figures. The first to emphasize the existence of stock types in mosaics was M. Blake in 1930.[184] After cataloging many of the Roman mosaics found in and around Rome, Blake began to see strong resemblances between images and thus posited the existence of models for the transmission of artistic ideas. Clarke came to a similar conclusion in his 1979 study of black-and-white figural mosaics in Italy, arguing that the mosaics were based on a standard repertoire.[185] Dunbabin in 1979 and Kondoleon in 1995 joined the ranks of scholars who have posited that artists, specifically mosaicists, drew on conventional types.[186] When it comes to scholars who study images of gladiators, however, Brown is one of the few to assume the existence of a stock repertoire for many of the figural images.[187] Robert had earlier observed similarities between depictions of gladiators across the Empire, but he suggested that the images found in the East were copied from other areas of the Empire without clarifying how this transmission would have taken place.[188]

If it is now generally accepted that a repertoire of images provided the basis for most artistic productions in the Roman Empire, the means of transmission of this repertoire is still disputed. Scholars commonly argue for either the use of copy books, which are also referred to as model books, or for a more dynamic practice, such as the memorization of

[183] See also the excellent discussion of compositional structures in the column of Trajan by Faust 2012, 88-9.
[184] Blake 1930, 21, 133.
[185] Clarke 1979, 15.
[186] Dunbabin 1978; Kondoleon 1995, 220-1; Dunbabin 1999, 300-3.
[187] Brown 1992, 182, 7.
[188] Robert 1940, 36-7.

images by craftsmen during their apprenticeship.[189] If we posit an informal canon of figural types for the rendering of images of the *munus*, it remains to be determined to what degree this canon was followed. A study of figural types reveals which aspects of the figures were maintained across time and space. It can also reveal the degree to which artists adapted the inherited repertoire.

Gladiatorial Combats

The most frequently depicted gladiator fight is between the *secutor* and *retiarius*.[190] A survey of encounters between these two classes of combatants illustrates the degree to which depictions followed established pictorial conventions. Overall there are about 22 known depictions of encounters between a *secutor* and *retiarius* on mosaic floors and in wall paintings. These illustrations show the gladiators in mid-fight, in the final moments of the fight, or following the fight. Depictions of gladiators in mid-fight bear the most similarity to one another, while depictions of gladiators following the conclusion of a fight are the most diverse and innovative. In mid-fight, highly energetic movements characterize the gladiators. The *secutor* is usually shown wearing a helmet, hiding behind a large rectangular shield, and holding a short sword. While he is typically seen from the side, the *retiarius*'s back or chest is always in full view and he is usually shown holding a short dagger in his left hand and aiming his trident in his right hand at the *secutor*. The gladiators are typically standing with one leg set forward, the knee bent and the back leg set back, providing stability but suggesting they have the agility to attack or ward off an attack. Many images feature both gladiators assuming an attack stance, poised to move towards one other. The seeming movement of the gladiators towards each other creates an energetic and exhilarating image. The outcome of the attack is not shown. The armor is fairly standardized although some variation is observable, such as the placement of protective pads on the

[189] See Bruneau 1984; Allison 1991; Ling 1994; Bruneau 2000; Touchette 2000; Donderer 2008a; Junker, Stähli, and Kunze 2008; Stauffer 2008; Clarke 2010.

[190] Hope 2001b, 97; Teyssier 2009, 9, 126-46: suggests that the *retiarius* was simply the most easily recognizable gladiator type, a possible reason why this pairing might have been especially popular. Epigraphic sources mention other types of gladiators more frequently or just as often as the *retiarius*, signaling that the *retiarius-secutor* pairing was not necessarily the most popular.

arms and legs; in some cases, the *retiarius* is shown wearing a helmet and even a shield, as for example in the wall painting from Mechern (Cat.Nr.40). The mosaic from Nennig (Cat.Nr.43) is noteworthy because of the clear definition of the gladiators' muscles. The activation of the muscles adds a sense of heightened concentration and excitement to the image.

The frontal view of the *retiarius* and side view of the *secutor* appear to be deliberate choices, for these poses best exhibit the armor characteristic of each gladiator. The *retiarius* traditionally fought without any protective gear covering his chest and only a metal sleeve on his left arm. By depicting him from the front or back, the artist was able to emphasize the near absence of armor. With his naked chest and light armor, he stands in stark contrast to the *secutor*. The side view of this type of gladiator is the most advantageous for showing the shield, leg protection, and helmet. The *secutor* is depicted as relying heavily on his armor by hiding behind the shield. The visual emphasis on the armor or its lack may have been was an effective way to portray the fighting styles of each gladiator and highlight the virtues of the different gladiatorial types. The naked chest of the *retiarius* gives him the appearance of being daring, courageous, and more aggressive in contrast to the *secutor* who is hiding behind a shield and thus appears somewhat passive and less reckless but more steadfast.[191]

Scenes depicting the last moments of a fight usually show a standing gladiator attacking a gladiator who has fallen on the ground. These images are compelling because they tend to depict the victorious gladiator as if he is still in mid-fight while the defeated gladiator is on the ground and bracing against the final blow. The defeated contestant is usually marked as such through the loss of all weapons, his position on the ground, and occasionally blood gushing from a wound;[192] a good example is a mosaic from Rome (Cat.Nr.74). Here the gladiator is shown lying on the ground; a lack of eye contact between

[191] The identification of gladiatorial types with certain personality traits and typical characteristics is corroborated by Artemidorus who describes the possible meaning of dreams containing gladiators in his book of dreams: Artemidorus 1975, 2, 32; Carter 2001.
[192] The pools of blood are not easily recognizable as they can be confused with shadows.

him and the victorious combatant appears to signal that the gladiator has died or is about to die. Both the *retiarius* and the *secutor* can be shown in the role of the defeated. There does not appear to be a prevalence of one winning more frequently than the other.

A survey of depictions of the *retiarii* and *secutores* shows that no two images are exact replicas of each other and that there was a fair amount of variation in their depiction. Similarities can be observed in the stance of the fighters, especially the attacking poses, as well as in their armor. But the figures could be combined in a variety of ways, indicating that the compositions were probably based on commonly occurring individual figures rather than on predefined group-compositions. This leads one to believe that the artisans or patrons decided which *secutor* type should be combined with which *retiarius* type. Nevertheless, rather than adhering to strictly predefined types, artisans seem to have relied on general conventions: each gladiator was shown in such a way as to emphasize his characteristic armor; certain stances were universal and could be adapted to fit any gladiator; and lack of eye contact signaled defeat and death.

Images of gladiators are distinguished by their armor. Every other aspect of these images is reminiscent of warriors in common battle scenes found on public and private monuments, such as the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. The stance of the fighters as well as the body language of the defeated also are seen in identical form in battle scenes, as for example on the column of Trajan, scene 94-97 and also 112.[193] This indicates that depictions of gladiators simply were formed of stock postures and figural types, developed to represent armed encounters, and artisans adapted them by including the characteristic gladiatorial armor.

[193] Although the column of Trajan and other Roman monuments do not commonly show one-on-one combats but instead depict mass battles where it is often difficult to discern the actual opponent of each fighter, the typical stance of the fighters does still resemble that found in gladiator depictions; see also Lehmann-Hartleben 1926, pl. 43-4, 53; Faust 2012, pl. 24, 6, 34.

Venationes

Depictions of *venationes* likewise appear to be based on a common visual language. A closer look at the combination of fighters and leopards from the Magerius Mosaic (Cat.Nr.13) reveals that there are similarities between these figures and figures in other mosaics (see fig. 1-2). For example, the leopards labeled Romanus and Victor are both seen in a jumping pose similar to that of a leopard depicted on a mosaic in Carthage (Cat.Nr.6). A vignette from Cos (Cat.Nr.23) shows a comparable combination of hunter and leopard. Here the forward movement of the hunter resembles the attack pose of gladiators and is comparable to the poses of the *venatores* Mamertinus and Spittara who are featured on the Magerius Mosaic. Mosaics from other areas of the Empire show similar poses as well – as for example, the leopards in one of the vignettes in the mosaic in Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr.57) or another on the mosaic from Tusculum (Cat.Nr.75). In the latter mosaic, the leopard jumps towards the hunter who is spearing it in the chest, causing blood to gush from the wound onto the ground. While this image might simply demonstrate the most effective way of killing a leopard, a second method of killing the feline is also shown on the Magerius Mosaic: here the leopard is attacked from either side by two hunters and is angrily defending itself. As it is being speared in the chest from the front, the leopard looks back at the hunter who attacks from behind, spearing it in the neck. Blood gushes from both wounds as well as a third wound on the leopard's back. This image finds counterparts in other mosaics, such as the encounter between two hunters and a leopard on the Worcester Mosaic from Antioch (Cat.Nr.78). In the Worchester Mosaic one hunter on horseback spears the leopard between the shoulder blades and the leopard's turned head and outstretched paw fending off the spear to the chest are distinctly reminiscent of the Magerius Mosaic. A vignette on the mosaic in Nennig (Cat.Nr.43) shows a hunter standing beside a leopard, which has just been speared between the shoulder blades. Like the leopards in the Worcester hunt and the Magerius Mosaic, the leopard in the mosaic from Nennig looks back and raises its paw towards the broken spear.

In these depictions of hunters, as *venatores*, artisans generally adopt the familiar attack posture seen in other armed encounters: the hunters lunge forward with one leg set

forward and bent and the back leg straight, a dramatic posture that seems to generate as much force as possible for spearing the leopard. The costumes of the hunters are similar from case to case but are adapted to fit the setting. All wear leather sandals and most have shin guards strapped to their legs. Their clothing, in contrast, varies greatly: some hunters wear pants while others are covered only with a loin cloth or a short tunic.

Interestingly, when shown in active combat, the hunters bear a general resemblance to gladiators. Their bent-knee pose signals forward movement towards the "enemy." Also like gladiators, many venatores are shown in profile, but with their chests turned towards the viewer to display their unprotected torsos in full view. Although it is not easy to depict a torso in complete profile, in this case the depiction of the unprotected chest is likely meant to emphasize the courage, strength, and fearlessness of the hunters who fight against wild animals, such as leopards or lions, with only a spear. Their courage is further highlighted by showing many of the animals as equal in size to, or larger than, the hunters.

Like gladiatorial images, the depictions of *venationes* rely on standard types – the speared and turning leopard or the attacking venator – which the artists combined with other figural types as needed.[194] Elements such as the leopard and the stance of the hunters follow distinct pictorial conventions. The hunters attack the animals in the same way a gladiator or soldier would attack an opponent while the animals stand and jump as they do in other images that are not necessarily related to *venationes*. Similar postures are found in so-called animal catalogs – mosaic programs of many different animals in a single image.[195] There are differences. The varied clothing of the hunters may reflect changing fashions or regional styles. Mosaics from Tusculum (Cat.Nr.75) and Antioch (Cat.Nr.78) date to the 4th to 5th century CE. Both feature hunters dressed in wide tunicae with the ornate *orbiculi* and *clavi* typical of late antique clothing. The hunters from Nennig and Bad Kreuznach, in contrast, wear close-fitting pants and tunic. Still other hunters, as those on the Magerius

[194] Kondoleon 1995, 288
[195] See also Dunbabin 1978, 72-4.

Mosaic from North Africa, wear decorative *tunicae*. As in the case of the gladiators, standard types were used and modified.

Animal Fights

Images of staged animal fights were likewise based on widespread conventions. Many of the figural types that appear in images of *venationes* reoccur in animal fight scenes. While some of the images are violent, showing the superior lion, bull, or leopard killing a weaker animal, many are less violent. In the less violent images the animals are lined up in single file as a way of demonstrating which animals were presented during the games. Elements of violence, such as knives and spears, are present merely to provide the context of a fight. A good example is the *triclinium* mosaic from the House of the Ostriches in Sousse (Cat.Nr.14), where the animals are shown in profile, most of them in mid-stride. Generally speaking, it is difficult to differentiate among images of animal fights, regular hunts, and other animal depictions such as those found in scenes of Orpheus taming the animals, or in so-called animal catalogs. It is context alone that makes it possible to interpret the image correctly.

V. Scheibelreiter recently pointed to a group of similar animal fight images that occur in both mosaics and wall paintings across the entire Roman Empire.[196] The image type shows a lion holding or standing over the head of either a donkey, bull, stag, or other animal. The image itself does not clearly identify the scene as part of a spectacle; however, this figural group appears as a vignette in several large mosaics involving spectacles, such as those in Nennig (Cat.Nr.43) and Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr.57). The combination of lion and donkey/bull in such images does appear to refer to animal fights in an amphitheater context, as Scheibelreiter convincingly argues. The combination of animals that do not live in the same regions, e.g. lion and stag, makes it likely that the animals were purposely placed together by humans. In many cases the image occurs on its own as the central motif

[196] Scheibelreiter 2005; Toynbee 1973, 68: already identified a couple examples of this group of images and carefully interpreted them as amphitheater or spectacle images.

of a floor mosaic, as in Ephesos (Cat.Nr.25) or in Verulamium (Cat.Nr.33), but the contexts of similar images suggest that these individual images do in fact refer to spectacles.

This group of images bears many similarities: the lion is shown as the powerful hunter with the head or body of his prey lying at his feet as a trophy. The prey varies but in most cases it is an animal of large size, such as a bull, or a stag, which in real life is often larger than a lion and a fierce fighter. Although the images are recognizable as a group, there is some variation among them: some images only show the detached head of the prey, while in others the prey is still alive. The images from Ephesos (Cat.Nr.25) and Nennig (Cat.Nr.43) are particularly arresting. In both cases the lion holds one paw on the head of the prey (a bull in Ephesos, and a donkey in Nennig) and looks towards the viewer. The postures and compositions of the images are very similar. Likewise, these images in Trier (Cat.Nr.47) and Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr.57) closely resemble one another: in both a bull attacks a lion that appears to be in control of the situation.

Based on the images described above, it is difficult to tell whether a specific model might have led to the distribution of this group of images, but the example of the lion and prey clearly demonstrates that certain images were popular across the empire and that the visual repertoire was repeated by artists. The overall composition of the images was dictated by conventions but some elements could be adapted to fit a specific region, e.g. the type of prey, or elements could be added, such as the addition of a trainer in the example from Nennig (Cat.Nr.43).

3. The Magerius Mosaic

The Magerius Mosaic (Cat.Nr.13)[197] is frequently mentioned in scholarship as a good example of the depiction of an actual spectacle event and proof that such depictions of spectacles were commissioned by wealthy patrons so as to commemorate their sponsorship of particular spectacles.[198] The mosaic was discovered in 1966 but its context was not well

[197] Initially published by Beschaouch 1966, 134-57; subsequent notable treatments: Dunbabin 1978, 67-9; Hanoune 2000, 1565-76; Bomgardner 2009, 165-77; frequently referred to by other authors.
[198] Eg. Dunbabin 1978, 67; Bomgardner 2009, 167.

documented, and so there is some confusion surrounding it. According to initial accounts, it was discovered in a private residence but a later publication states that it was found in the bath building adjacent to a villa.[199] Current publications state that the findspot was a private domicile, but the exact location remains unknown. Thus it is difficult to determine either the social status of Magerius or the audience for the mosaic. The site of Smirat is fairly remote, and there was no contemporary settlement in immediate proximity. The residence is likely to have been a country villa with a large farm, but its size is unclear. That the Magerius Mosaic itself is large and elaborate and would have been expensive suggests that its patron was wealthy.

The mosaic follows the typical conventions of an all-over composition. It is rectangular in shape and viewable from multiple angles. A large part of the upper right corner is missing.[200] The images consist of four named *venatores* in the process of killing four named leopards. The leopards are set in the four corners of the image creating a balanced composition. One leopard (Luxurius) has been mortally wounded and left to die on his own, while two *venatores* (Bullarius and Hilarinus) are jointly attacking another leopard (Crispinus) from either side. The two other groups each consist of a *venator* stabbing a leopard in the chest with a lance (Spittara versus Victor and Mamertinus versus Romanus). These fight groups are arranged along the long edge of the mosaic and are separated in the middle by a row of three figures and an inscription. In the center is a herald dressed in a tunic with purple *clavi* and holding a large platter on which are four money bags marked with the symbol for 1000 (∞). To his left is a female figure holding a branch in her left arm wearing a short tunic and hunting boots. She was first identified by Beschaouch as Diana holding a stalk of millet, but the connection between Diana and millet is unclear.[201] It is more likely that she is holding a palm branch and, therefore, might be identified as the

[199] Beschaouch 1966, 134-57; Hugoniot 2003, vol. 3, 23-4, Cat.Nr. 8.
[200] The short edge on the right side of the mosaic is usually not shown in photographs but the image does not extend any further to the right. The right-hand edge is shown in the original publication by Beschaouch 1966, pl. I.
[201] Beschaouch 1966, 35, fn. 3; see also Kondoleon 1999, 331: who describes Diana as the goddess of the amphitheater.

figure of victory.[202] Her position beside the herald holding the prize money would be fitting, as she symbolizes triumph. To the herald's right is a naked male figure, Bacchus, holding a *kerykeion* in his left hand and possibly a *patera* in his right. These figures have been identified as gods who oversee the games and honor the sponsor of the event. The goddess of victory would have symbolized both the triumph of the *venatores* over the leopards and the victory of humans over nature. Bacchus is known to have been the patron deity of this group of North African *venatores*.[203] One figure is less easy to identify than the others: the large, male figure in the upper right hand corner. Only the right shoulder, part of the right arm, and the head of this figure are preserved. However, the head is larger than those of the other figures. His garment appears to be colorful and ornate and he looks towards Bacchus. Based on these details and his position beside Bacchus, many scholars have plausibly identified him as Magerius.

To either side of the herald is a long two-part inscription. The inscription on the left begins with the words he speaks (*per curionem dictum*…): the troupe of *venatores* is identified as the *familia* of the Telegenii, a well-documented North African group of *venatores*. The price for each leopard killed is stated to be 500 *denarii*. The inscription continues on the right with the response of the crowd (*adclamatum est*…), a so-called *adclamatio*. The crowd praises the games above all others and applauds Magerius for his generosity, which is exemplary of what the wealthy should do. The inscription makes the mosaic seem fairly easy to understand. It informs the viewer of the identity of the main figure and provides some details of the event but, as will be shown, the inscriptions only inform the viewer about the aspects of the event important to the patron.

The mosaic combines traditional with less common visual elements, as stated above. The best-known parts of the mosaic are the animal hunt scenes. The leopards and *venatores* are shown in typical stances and find parallels in many other parts of the Roman Empire.

[202] She is admittedly missing wings; see also Hölscher 1967; Bohne 2011, 185-6; see also the depiction of victorious charioteers in Dunbabin 1982.
[203] Dunbabin 1978, 67.

The *venatio* images in the Magerius mosaic are based on known figural types, but certain images are adapted to the situation. For example, the *venator* Spittara is seen fighting on short stilts. But overall they rely on a common Roman visual vocabulary. Comparison of these images with similar ones across the Roman Empire suggests that the patron did not insist on giving an accurate visual account of the events but instead was content if the artist conveyed a general impression of the activities that took place based by employing a set of visual images familiar to all – so long as inscriptions marked the occasion.

However, the Magerius mosaic is still highly unusual and is more complicated than it at first appears. The mosaic differs from other spectacle mosaics in that it includes an extensive inscription, multiple mentions of the sponsor, additional figures at the center of the composition, and money bags. The names inscribed on the mosaic have recently been the focus of two studies.[204] In a thorough study of the etymology of the names, R. Hanoune demonstrates that the name Magerius is not known from any other inscription or other records of Roman officials in North Africa. He therefore argues that the name Magerius might derive from the Greek term *mageiros* or butcher. This suggests that Magerius might not have been a member of the political elite who are thought to have typically sponsored such games. This raises an interesting question: was Magerius in a position to sponsor *venationes* or is this mosaic evidence of a local landowner attempting to emulate elite practices of sponsorship?[205]

In addition to Magerius, the other represented figures, including the leopards, are named. While the group of *venatores* referred to as the Telegenii is well-attested in North Africa, the names of the individual *venatores* are not otherwise attested. Among the inscribed names, Spittara, Bullarius, and Hilarinus are unique, while the name Mamertinus is likely linked to the *Mamertines*, a group of Campanian mercenaries and former allies of

[204] Hanoune 2000; Bomgardner 2009, 168.
[205] Hanoune 2000, 1569-71; see also a similar suggestion by Scheibelreiter 2005, 312: "Beim Mageriusmosaik steht nicht die Schilderung eines realen Geschehens im Vordergrund, sondern das exemplarische Moment des Spektakels. Es ist daher verständlich, daß derartige Darstellungen auch in Häuser Eingang fanden, deren Bewohner nie Zirkusspiele finanziert hatten, aber eine gewisse Lebensart demonstrieren wollten."

the Carthaginians, who played a decisive role in the first Punic war in the 3rd century BCE. Interestingly, the *venator* Mamertinus is shown engaged in killing a leopard identified as Romanus, "the Roman." While the combination of the Mamertine and the Roman appears to refer to the Punic Wars, in this case – contrary to the outcome of that war – the Roman is beaten. The other leopards have equally telling names, such as Victor, "the victorious one," Crispinus, "the curly one," and Luxurius, "the luxurious one." These three leopards' names do not appear to reference a historic or political event. They might simply represent an attempt at humor and irony.[206] The practice of naming animals is not unusual. Other North African mosaics, such as the animal hunt mosaic in Radès (Cat.Nr.12), also label animals with names.[207]

An unusual feature of the Magerius Mosaic is its emphasis on money. While the inscription explains the sponsorship of the games, the point about wealth is made pictorially, by a figure in a tunic at the center of the mosaic that holds a platter with four money bags on it. It would thus have been clear to all viewers – literate as well as illiterate – how much money was paid for the games. Details of the financing of games are common in public inscriptions, but no other example from a private context is known that gives exactly the amount paid for a spectacle. It is common to show the awarding of prizes to the victorious athletes – usually a palm branch or wreath of some sort – and money bags do sometimes occur. As in the Magerius Mosaic the bags, when depicted, usually have the sum of money they contain written on the outside. As Bohne has recently demonstrated, images of money bags are particularly common in North Africa in the mid-3rd to 4th century,[208] but only in representations of athletic competitions in public contexts. Rarely did such imagery appear in a private setting, doubtless because the practice was considered vulgar. The prize for a victory was intended to be honor, symbolized by the palm and wreath rather than financial gain indicated by money.[209] It appears that the visual language was borrowed as a

[206] Bomgardner 2009, 168.
[207] See also Toynbee 1948.
[208] Bohne 2011, 196-9.
[209] Dunbabin 2010, 343-5.

way of illustrating Magerius' great largesse and possibly even suggesting the personal triumph of the wealthy patron. [210] Magerius seems to have been something of a 3rd-century Trimalchio.

In addition to its unusual use of athletic imagery in an image of spectacle, the Magerius Mosaic is depicting the sponsor himself. While other mosaics, such as the mosaics from Rome now in Madrid (Cat.Nr.74), might mention the sponsor's name, no other mosaic or wall painting is known that depicts the sponsor. This is also true for athletic images and makes the Magerius Mosaic quite unusual.[211]

The Magerius Mosaic is an alluring image that overtly brings together conventional images with less common compositional elements. It is telling that the unusual parts of the image are so prominently presented at the center of the image and that these elements are specifically reinforced through the inscription. The unusual figures indicate that the patron was particularly concerned not only to show himself as a wealthy man but to demonstrate that he generously fulfilled certain obligations associated with Roman elite patrons.

4. The Visual Language of Spectacle

The Magerius Mosaic, like the other images discussed above, demonstrates that spectacle images were created from a known visual vocabulary that could be adapted to fit particular situations and convey specific messages. The images were not only defined by their figural components but also by the overall layout and architectural context of the images: the craftsmen and patron had to define the basic decorative design of the image as well as choose appropriate figural types. A survey of the known spectacle images supports the notion that three compositional schemes – the all-over-scheme, the vignette-scheme, and the frieze scheme – were thought to be best suited for the depiction of spectacles. The images further show basic similarities between figures from different mosaics and wall

[210] See Bohne 2011, 207-10. Another aspect is surprising considering the money bags: at athletic competitions it is known that the sponsors had to hand over the prize money to the officials in charge of the event before the competition began.
[211] Bohne 2011, 60-1.

paintings across the entire Roman Empire and across time. Depending on the subject matter, some figures bear a greater number of similarities than others. For example gladiators wear similar clothing and have comparable stances; however, in other respects they differ greatly. In contrast, depictions of animals appear to follow certain image types more closely. The replication of complicated body movements, such as the turned body of the leopard Crispinus depicted on the Magerius Mosaic, reappears on other mosaics, indicating that these were specific types that artists were familiar with across the entire Roman Empire.

These similarities lead me to multiple conclusions. First I suggest that not all visual forms were transmitted in the same way and that image types were treated in different ways by different artists. Second, the similarities between images point towards a common visual language that would have aided patrons and artists in the production process but were equally useful to viewers. Third, the similarities between images suggest that the individual figures were not continually reinvented but instead were drawn from a common visual repertoire. Thus, patrons could not aspire to accurate historic realities because artists crafted their programs from stock figural types. Instead, they seem to have urged the artisans to convey messages regarding their wealth and social status, their background and learning, or their political ambitions.

Transmission of Images

The topic of the modes of transmission of images throughout the Roman Empire has been hotly debated for the past 50 years. As already mentioned, some scholars believe that artists and craftsmen relied on copy books for generating images for paintings and mosaics. These copy books, valuable possessions, would have been shared among craftsmen in a workshop. Other scholars do not agree with this proposition and claim that training was more important and that in the course of their apprenticeship craftsmen would have memorized a large repertoire of figural types and images.[212] The debate over the existence and use of copy books has become muddled by a confusion of terms and a seeming lack of

[212] Most prominently see the work of Bruneau 1984, 2000; Kondoleon 1995, 190-221; Dunbabin 1999, 302-3.

reflection on artistic processes.[213] The tendency has been to hold fast to one explanation for the transmission of images over another without taking into account the complex, and likely often chaotic, procedures involved in producing a mosaic or wall painting. Considering the vast size of the Roman Empire, the many different artistic backgrounds, and varying levels of expertise among workshops, a single method for the transmission of images appears unlikely. It is not surprising, therefore, that the evidence of spectacle imagery does not suggest a preference for one method of transmission over another. It is possible that artists relied on a combination of sources for creating their images. Gladiator figures were based on conventional figure types used to depict other armed encounters. The armor worn by the figures could have been created from memory, as specific gladiatorial types and their costumes would have been well known to both patrons and artists from visits to the amphitheater. In contrast, it is more likely that at least some of the animal depictions were drawn from collections of images, which possibly traveled as copy books. Most artists had probably never encountered some of the animals they were asked to depict and would have had to rely on common types. Here regional factors would have played a role: an artisan from Britannia was less likely to be familiar with the physiognomy of a lion than was an artist from North Africa, and he would probably have had to rely on earlier images to render the animal.

As other scholars have suggested the preserved depictions of spectacle indicate that for other images artists drew on a repertoire of single figures that were continually recombined as needed. [214] By composing images out of individual figures that had either been memorized at some point or were copied from model books, a workshop could use the same figures to illustrate, say, a *venatio* or the mythological scene of Orpheus taming the animals.

[213] While some terms, such as copy book, model book, or even pattern book, describe the process of collecting images or figural types on sheets of papyrus, parchment, or other materials, other terms, such as sketch, draft, or also pattern book, might simply refer to a preliminary drawing made in preparation of an actual wall painting, mosaic, or other artistic product. Differentiating between these two categories of images is difficult, and drawings on papyrus cannot be definitively identified, as either pages of a copy book or simply as preliminary sketches.

[214] Kondoleon 1995, 191-203; Dunbabin 1999, 298-303.

Roman Art Theory

While the analysis of spectacle images does provide some insight into possible methods of transmission, the similarities observed can contribute more generally to the understanding of the ways in which Roman art worked as a semiotic system. The commonalities indicate that there was a well-developed visual language, accessible to many. In his study on the language of Roman art, Hölscher applied aspects of linguistic theory to Roman art in an effort to account for both its unusual and its universal qualities.[215] He argues that although Roman art might appear repetitive and therefore be accused of lacking in creativity, its force lay in its capacity to draw on common and well-known pictorial types to convey specific messages and meaning. The types functioned as elements in a semantic system. The corollary was that viewers, both educated and less educated, were able to interpret the intended meanings of the images, at least to a certain degree. Thus, familiarity with semantic system made the images easily legible by a broad group of people. Hölscher regards Roman art as mobilizing a repetitive set of visual components of Greek or Hellenistic origin. These components were of particular use to craftsmen who could simply create images out of a set of types and were also helpful to the elites interested in broadcasting messages about themselves. He further argues that the general appeal of this visual language for the elites and the craftsmen assured its longevity and application across the Roman Empire.

Although there has been some contention with respect to Hölscher's model,[216] it proves to be generally applicable to spectacle imagery, helping to explain the commonalities apparent within this group of images across the Roman Empire. His theory draws attention to the usefulness of repetitive image types, not only as a means of artistic production but also as a mode of communication. By reusing known figural types it was possible to construct legible visual messages that could be understood by a broad

[215] Hölscher 1987; Hölscher 2004 (English translation).

[216] See also Elsner's introduction to the English translation of Hölscher 2004; in particular his belief that all images can be traced to Greek and Hellenistic stereotypes is not accepted by all. To my knowledge, Hölscher's theory has not received much attention in English language treatments of Roman image theory.

viewership. The benefit of Hölscher's model is its consideration of the viewer. By focusing on the function of repetitive images, it provides a key to understanding visual images as they were employed throughout the Roman Empire.

Hölscher's theory is supported by E. Perry's work on emulation and *decorum*. Perry has convincingly applied the rhetorical concept of appropriateness, or *decorum*, to the visual arts and analyzed its effects on Roman artistic production. By demonstrating that Romans had strong feelings as to what sorts of images were appropriate in different contexts, Perry underscored the utility of a "formulaic visual language."[217] The fact that certain image types and themes were deemed proper for the decoration of certain kinds of spaces heightened the appeal of standardized images. Patrons, including those who chose spectacle imagery for their domiciles, would have wanted to decorate their homes in a way that reflected well on them. Most importantly, decor had to be considered appropriate. At the same time Perry points out that there was some scope for variation. The mix of old and new in the Magerius Mosaic might illustrate such a play with the boundaries of propriety. The idea of *decorum* would likely have influenced Magerius' choice of imagery, but also, like Trimalchio, he may have trespassed the bounds of appropriateness.

The benefits of mobilizing types for conveying messages would have been particularly apparent to wealthy individuals who were not only the patrons of many of these spectacle images but often sponsored the spectacles themselves. A patron could portray himself as the ideal benefactor and advocate of Roman morals, as did Magerius, or emphasize certain male Roman virtues, such as fearlessness, courage, and strength as visualized by gladiators, or illustrate the taming and civilizing of nature by the Romans through depictions of the *venationes*. Thus, it is likely that elites, along with the craftsmen, would have played an important role in the perpetuation of spectacle image types over the course of many centuries.

[217] Perry 2005, 48-9; see also Bergmann 1991.

Historicity of Spectacle Images

Based on the visual evidence, it is no longer possible to interpret spectacle images as historically accurate representations of the events that took place during a *munus*.[218] The Magerius Mosaic is the only known example of a spectacle image that claims to depict a specific event. Even so, as I have shown, most of the individual visual elements of the mosaic were based on figural types that appear in other images. The *venatores* and leopards follow rather common figural types. The mosaic does not attempt to portray a single moment of the spectacle but combines highlights from various parts of the ephemeral event. The selection of figures, including the gods, and in particular, the prominent placement of the herald with the money, indicates that Magerius did not intend to reproduce the event as it occurred but to suggest the significance of the event. The mosaicist deployed known figural types common to the standardized visual language to trumpet the munificence of the patron. The inscription as well as the visual representation make it apparent that the patron wished primarily for the viewer to understand how much he had spent on the games, so that the spectators would not only approve of his generosity but also hail him as an ideal sponsor. In this particular case it is likely that Magerius referred to a specific event, but he took full advantage of the known figural repertoire to inform future viewers about his social standing as a generous sponsor of games.

The Magerius Mosaic demonstrates two key factors necessary for approaching spectacle images. First, the depiction of such an event is always an interpretation, not a mere recounting of what happened. The scenes and motifs shown in the Magerius Mosaic are the elements that Magerius wanted emphasized. Second, it is easier to convey a message by means of a typified representation than by unfamiliar forms. An accurate snapshot of an event, even had it been possible to render such in mosaic, would not have

[218] A prominent scholar who uses spectacle images for the reconstruction of gladiatorial armor and reenactment of gladiatorial combats is M. Junkelmann (see Junkelmann 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2008); see also the close analysis of the development of weaponry in the gladiatorial images on terra sigillata by K. Kazek (Kazek 2012). The author assumes that the craftsmen producing the terra sigillata images correctly etched up-to-date gladiatorial weaponry and does not consider whether the artists might have reused out-of-date image molds or models.

had the desired ability to communicate: it would not be useful to a patron because it would not have provided any information about him, and the image would have been simply decorative but without a specific purpose. As scholars like Hölscher have demonstrated in the case of prominent monuments, such as the Column of Trajan, the images shown are constructs intended to simulate reality but only in very few cases do they actually portray reality.[219] As I have argued in this chapter, the same principle applies to images of spectacle.

[219] Richter 2010; Faust 2012. See Hölscher 2003, 3-4: argues that we should ignore such concepts as realism and idealism and instead suggests that in images of war "military reality and ideological concepts were made to relate to each other, in specific and shifting ways".

Chapter 4: Function and Context of Spectacle Images

Images generate meaning through the subject matter of the depiction, their composition – as seen in the previous chapter – as well as through their immediate context. This last dimension is particularly true for immovable images such as wall painting and mosaics. The placement and context of these images was carefully considered and in most cases had a specific purpose. The images could enhance the overall impression of the room, aid in organizing space, generate ideas of luxury, and as in our case remind us of particular Roman forms of entertainment. While the depiction illustrates a particular subject matter, the architectural context and viewing experience often is crucial for understanding the actual meaning of the images that was intended by the patron.

The images at the center of this study were mainly discovered in large houses or villas, most set in the countryside, some in urban contexts. Previous studies have shown that the spaces of these large houses followed strict organizational principles, which reflected the owner's social status and wealth. The extent of the identification between patrons and their houses is suggested by accounts by Latin authors that in Rome the houses of certain people were sometimes completely razed in an attempt to eradicate their memory.[220] This demonstrates how a patron wished to present himself and was an important element in the construction of status.[221] While houses were likely not regularly razed but the account indicates that the architecture and decoration were vital aspects in the construction of an identity and thus they can provide insights into the rank and position

[220] A prominent example is the destruction of Cicero's house on the Palatine by P. Clodius in 58 BCE: Cic., *Dom*. 62; *Red. Sen.* 18; *Att*. 4.2.5, 7. For a discussion of the sources, see Bodel 1997; see also:Bergmann 1994, 225-6.
[221] Scott 1991, 29; Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 4-8; Bodel 1997; Stewart 2008, 68; Roymans and Derks 2011, 28-9; Zarmakoupi 2014, 376.

of the patron. Houses reveal how a patron wished to present himself or herself and were an important element in the construction of status.[222]

The Roman patron was, therefore, concerned with the design of his house because it fulfilled a wide variety of functions in addition to being the home of his *familia*. Houses generally were divided into areas for the reception of guests and clients and areas reserved for the *familia* and close relations.[223] This division of space was articulated through varying degrees of physical accessibility. Rooms easily accessible from the entrance and enhanced by visual axes often feature the most elaborate decoration and were primarily used as reception and dining spaces. Rooms further removed from the entrance are often less ornate and were likely used by the *familia*. The decoration, especially the floor mosaics, played a vital role in reinforcing the structure of the house. Mosaics could function as a guide through the space and was an integral part in the design of the house.[224]

Today, the images, their placement, and the larger context within the house can provide insight into the way the images were viewed and experienced and how the space was experienced in its entirety, an approach that will feature prominently in this chapter. The issue of visual culture in domestic contexts has been widely researched and it is clear that Roman villa culture is a complex subject. In this chapter I first discuss the relevant scholarship in order to better explain my approach and my selection of case studies. My discussion then turns to a series of case studies that demonstrate the wide variety of possible contexts of spectacle images and I explore the meaning that the images could have had within their varying architectural contexts.

1. Context and Findspots

In the past 25 years, the archaeological contexts in which images were discovered have begun to receive increased attention. Previously, the tendency was to treat images as

[222] Scott 1991, 29; Stewart 2008, 68.
[223] Vitruvius 6.5; see also Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 10-1
[224] Scott 1994, 87; Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 36.

works of art separated from their original surroundings.[225] Mosaics and wall paintings were often physically removed from their findspots for preservation, but were hung on museum walls or placed in store rooms without a full record of their original location. In addition, the borders and geometric decorations surrounding the figural images were often removed.[226] In any event these would regularly be cropped out of published photographs.

In the course of the late 1970's and the 1980's scholars turned their attention to mosaics as significant elements of the decoration of lived spaces in Greco-Roman antiquity.[227] In his stylistic analysis of black-and-white figural mosaics from Italy Clarke threw light on the coordination of mosaic design with architecture. He argues that mosaics were designed to enhance structural features of the room in question and to provide a guide through inhabited spaces, an aspect he refers to as "kinesthetic address".[228] Following this the work of Dunbabin on the mosaics of North Africa and A. Wallace-Hadrill's work on houses in Pompeii set in motion a whole new way of studying the domestic space. Kondoleon describes the new approach as follows: "Recent scholarship … draws on the premise that the art and architecture of Roman houses expresses the social realities of their inhabitants."[229] Scholars began to study Roman domestic space in its entirety, incorporating floor plans and decoration into their arguments about the use of space. Central to these studies is the identification of spatial hierarchies, i.e. distinctions between more ornate decorated areas of the house open to visitors and guests and more modest spaces used by members of the household. The ornate areas of the house would have been used for more formal events that were intended to impress guests with the wealth and learning of the patron as well as his or her social standing. Decoration in the form of wall painting and mosaic flooring help to direct the thoughts and the movements of the visitor.

[225] Exceptions to this are Schefold 1952; Thompson 1960b, 1960a.
[226] E.g. the wall painting of the *Riot in the Amphitheater* from Pompeii is shown in many publications and handbooks without mentioning its original location. It was framed and is on display in the archaeological museum in Naples. The image is known to have been surrounded on either side by depictions of fighting gladiators but there is no other information about the decoration of the rest of the wall.
[227] Clarke 1979; Thébert 1987; Gazda 1991; Kondoleon 1991; Scott 1991, 1994; Kondoleon 1995; Muth 1998, 28; Scott 2000; Westgate 2010.
[228] Clarke 1975, 1979.
[229] Kondoleon 1995, 1.

Studying domestic architecture inevitably leads to discussions about the public and private areas of lived space. Wallace-Hadrill's publication on the social structure of the Roman house has been seminal in this regard.[230] The primary merit of his essay was the coupling of architecture with the actions that took place within the spaces. He did not simply review a house plan to determine the location and function of the rooms. Instead, he argued that the house was connected to the Roman social system and reinforced the social hierarchy. He attempted to examine the Roman house through the lens of the various types of social encounters that would have taken place within. The level of decoration was seen as an indication of public or private space. However, Wallace-Hadrill argues for gradations of public and private spaces using a now widely employed scheme of "axes of differentiation" to describe social access.[231]

Wallace-Hadrill's work highlighted the social dimension of the house. Decoration began to be viewed as a meaningful part of a room that could provide essential information about the social uses of specific spaces. It is necessary to differentiate between the social and the functional use of space, as these two aspects are frequently conflated. The location and accessibility of a room provides clues about the people who would have entered the space. An easily accessible room in close proximity to the entrance might have been entered by more people than other rooms further removed from the entrance. Ideas about the function of rooms have often predominated in discussions of houses, largely based on the names the Roman architect Vitruvius assigned to a variety of rooms. Scholars have taken terms, such as atrium, cubiculum, and tablinum to indicate a single function for these rooms. However, this method of assigning functions to rooms has come under fire in more recent literature.[232] P. Allison, among others, has argued that Roman houses did not have rooms with a single function, but, that the domestic spaces would most likely have been

[230] Wallace-Hadrill 1994; part 1 was originally published as Wallace-Hadrill 1988.
[231] Wallace-Hadrill 1994; The discussion of private versus public is popular in the English-language publications and does not take place in such form among German scholars. Here, the important factor is whether a room is "repräsentativ" or not. It is insinuated that the other rooms were more or less private with varying degrees of privacy. See for example the publications on the Residential Units in the Terrace House 2 in Ephesos: Krinzinger 2002; Thür et al. 2005; Adenstedt and Krinzinger 2010; Thür and Adenstedt 2014.
[232] Allison 1991, 2001.

multi-functional, the use depending on the time of day and even the season.[233] Furthermore, the function of specific rooms and the lived space in general differed across the Roman Empire because of varying traditions and climates.

The primary function of some rooms can be established on the basis of mosaics, e.g. the mosaics in *triclinia*. Here, the mosaic conforms to the U-shape of the outline of the dining couches and the floor beneath the couches is usually not decorated. The central T-zone is where figural scenes tend to appear.[234] Likewise baths and bedrooms can be identified on the basis of floor decoration and architectural forms. By studying the decoration, we can gain a better understanding of the social functions of certain spaces or entire areas of a house.[235] But it must be kept in mind that most rooms likely served a variety of purposes.

Referring to Wallace-Hadrill's work, Muth argues that a lived space is primarily defined, and thus experienced through, its internal spatial hierarchy and not its function.[236] Muth is conscious of the accessibility of rooms. Accessibility, she argues, is an important factor when considering the degree of intimacy of a room and the range of activities that could have taken place there. Thus, an easily accessible *triclinium* close to the entrance of the home might have a greater public impact than an overly-ornate reception room tucked away towards the back of the house.

Attempts at interpreting mosaics and wall painting in their archaeological contexts have not always been successful, since there is the danger of circular reasoning and oversimplification. One assumption is that certain types of images are only found in specific types of rooms or contexts, as for example that gladiatorial scenes are only found in *triclinia* or only in baths.[237] In such simplistic models, it is assumed that certain images are restricted to one function or message that can only be understood in a single context. However, as I

[233] See Gazda 1991, xii-xiii; Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill 1997.
[234] See also Muth 1998, 35-6; Scheibelreiter 2011, 99-106.
[235] See Westgate 2010.
[236] Muth 1998, 51.
[237] See the literature on the mosaic from Augsburg (Cat.Nr. 77): Parlasca 1959, 101-2.

will show further on in this chapter, gladiatorial images appear in a variety of contexts and different types of rooms. The images may have a similar message but they can function in different ways depending on how they were viewed and incorporated into the architectural setting.[238]

Similarly simplistic interpretive models of image analysis have sometimes been employed in attempts to determine the use of houses. For example, a gladiatorial mosaic was discovered in a large house in Kaiseraugst (Cat.Nr.39). It originally consisted of at least two houses of a type common in the city, though by circa 200 CE it had been extended to occupy the entire insula. The appearance of the mosaic together with the presence of two small finds, a small statue of Mars and a stilet (dagger) peripherally related to gladiatorial combat, have led to the suggestion that this house was not a private home but rather a gathering place or club house of gladiators.[239] There is very little evidence to support the correlation between the small finds and the presence of gladiators. It is far more likely that an owner of the house enjoyed gladiatorial fights or wished to show his appreciation of Roman entertainment. Likewise, it is often assumed that images of gladiatorial fights are found only in domestic contexts. For example, the discovery of fragments of a wall painting on a gladiatorial theme found in the terrain de Lestrade in Périgueux (Cat.Nr.37) has led to the identification of the context as a private house. The excavation took place in the early 1900's, and the excavations were poorly documented. The published plan of the area is more suggestive of public buildings, such as a basilica and an adjacent forum. It is also possible that the wall painting is from an earlier building, possibly for private use, predating the public buildings that were built in the early 2nd century.[240] However, in this case scholars immediately identified the site as private based on the image rather than an evaluation of the architectural context.

[238] See also the critique by Muth 1998, 33-4.
[239] Berger and Joos 1971, 71.
[240] Barbet 1999, 7-8.

In addition to the above mentioned problems of archaeological interpretation, other challenges emerge with respect to the analysis of images of spectacle. The most substantial is the lack of documentation regarding the excavation and discovery of the mosaics. Even in cases when mosaics were meticulously documented, their context is often not entirely understood because the houses themselves were never fully excavated. There are many justifiable reasons for not exploring a house or other architectural unit, but for the purposes of this chapter all images without a completely documented context are excluded from discussion. While mosaics are usually discovered in situ and can only be moved with great difficulty, wall paintings are more prone to damage. They frequently detach from walls due to decay or are detached during renovation work. As a result, in many cases fragments of wall painting are not found on the walls they once decorated. Some of the fragments here studied were discovered along the bases of the walls they likely covered at one point while others have been discovered in dumps in or around the houses.

Of the 79 images in my corpus, the archaeological contexts of 48 are known. Many with unknown contexts were discovered in the 19th century, and information regarding the find circumstances of their discovery is either lost or was never recorded. One image (Cat.Nr.67: Civitavecchia) was discovered in illegal excavations and appears to be part of a private collection of undisclosed location. Other paintings and mosaics were excavated but only published in small local journals that are very difficult to locate (e.g. Cat.Nr.36: Nin). A few images were excavated more recently, and though the results are largely unpublished, they will hopefully be made accessible in the near future (e.g. Cat.Nr.55: Cologne, Cat.Nr.10: Leptis Magna). While the results of these recent excavations are likely to be exciting, they are limited in number and thus will not likely change the overall conclusions of this chapter.

2. General Patterns in Findspots

In her work on aesthetics and *decorum* E. Perry discusses what Romans considered to be appropriate in regard both to morals and to decoration. Roman notions of *decorum* can be detected in the subject matter of artworks and the architectural context in which they appear; they color the way the patron displayed identity and status. In her assessment

of the propriety of placing specific works of art in particular places Perry concludes: "It would seem that the principle of decorum places some limitations on the kind of art that can be displayed in a given context, but it does not prescribe that particular works absolutely must be found in particular architectural settings."[241] This rings particularly true for the situation of spectacle images, where images appear in various spaces. Despite the relatively small number of images, trends in the display contexts of spectacle images do emerge.

The overwhelming majority of spectacle images have been discovered in private contexts. Of the 48 images with known contexts, 42 were uncovered in architectural units that can be securely identified as domestic spaces. Only one mosaic originally decorated a public bath (Cat.Nr.4: Philippi), while two were placed in baths attached to private houses (Cat.Nr.10: Leptis Magna; Cat.Nr.32: Eccles). One image was part of a burial ensemble (Cat.Nr.69: Pompeii). Two images were part of the decoration of the arena wall of an amphitheater (Cat.Nr.63: Mérida; Cat.Nr.71: Pompeii).

The following analyses will first focus on the more unusual non-domestic contexts, in particular the burial ensemble and amphitheaters, and then continue with domestic contexts.

3. Non-Domestic Contexts

Burial Contexts

By defining the conventional it is possible to distinguish elements that deviate from the norm.[242] The tomb of C. Vestorius Priscus (Cat.Nr.69) in Pompeii is particularly interesting because of the unique placement of spectacle imagery and the presence of an inscription about the deceased. C. Vestorius Priscus' mother had the tomb built for her 22 year-old son, who had held the position of aedile at the time of his death in 70/1 CE. The tomb is elaborately decorated: it shows the young aedile sitting on a bronze folding chair along with a scene of five men banqueting and drinking wine outdoors as well as a Nilotic

[241] Perry 2005, 54.
[242] Muth 1998, 35-6.

scene of unruly pygmies sailing in large boats. Two gladiators in combat, silver vessels, and animals hunting each other complete the ensemble. Clarke argues that these images are intended to show Priscus' wealth and his "enjoyment of the good life."[243] The meaning of the spectacle images remains debated: in his position as aedile, Priscus would have been in charge of organizing gladiatorial games, and it has been assumed that the image commemorates the games he had organized. However, the inscription does not mention Priscus' sponsorship of games, nor is there any other evidence that Priscus might have organized *munera*. It has therefore been suggested that the gladiatorial scene represents an idealized event: an event that Priscus could have organized in his position as aedile. In this location, alongside other references to Priscus' official functions, enjoyment of life, and wealth, it is conceivable that this gladiatorial image was included as a way of portraying Priscus' social status. Prosopographical studies of Pompeiian inhabitants indicate that the name Priscus was fairly common in the town, and J. Andreau claims that the family was of humble origin but likely not former slaves.[244]

The tomb itself is small: an altar is set in the center and is surrounded by a high wall. The interior was decorated with wall painting and stucco and there is no marble or bronze.[245] The tomb was highly visible and people passing through the Vesuvian Gate would have seen it, however, as was normal, it was closed by a door and was not accessible to non-family members; even they had access only on special occasions, such as the burial of other family members. The question then becomes how these images should be understood if they were so rarely seen and by such a closed circle. It is likely that the images can be interpreted in the same way as if in a house, their role being to memorialize a worthy ancestor and, for family members, to raise the perceived status of the *familia*. A tomb was an ideal location for keeping the memory of a deserving family member alive over the course of generations and for constructing the family's identity.[246]

[243] Mols and Moormann 1993-94; Clarke 2003, 187-203; Jacobelli 2003, 92-4.
[244] Andreau 1987, 336; Clarke 2003, 187-203; Stewart 2008, 68-9.
[245] Clarke 2003, 189.
[246] See also Perry 2005, 75; Stewart 2008, 70.

Amphitheaters

The presence of spectacle images in an amphitheater is particularly surprising and, in this context, the images might appear to mirror the actual events. The wall paintings in Mérida (Cat.Nr.63) and Pompeii (Cat.Nr.71) were discovered by chance, and, they bear surprising similarities. In both cases animal hunts and animal fights are marked by a preference for wild cats. Special attention is also given to portraying a naturalistic background. The paintings from Mérida, less well preserved than those in Pompeii, were discovered on blocks that had been deposited in close proximity to the arena, and the archaeologists assigned them to the amphitheater based on the comparable dimensions of the blocks and type of stone.[247] In Pompeii the image is still in situ. The similarity of these paintings from distant locales suggests that other arenas were decorated in like fashion. Paintings in amphitheaters would always suffer from exposure to the weather, but it may also be that the traces were not recognized at the time of excavation and study. Future excavations might lead to the discovery of more spectacle paintings in amphitheaters, a supposition that is suggested by records of now lost painted venatio scenes in the amphitheater of Corinth,[248] as well as the comparable depictions in stone in the amphitheater of Capua.

The amphitheater of Capua is one of the largest discovered to date, second only to the Colosseum in Rome in size. Its decoration is elaborate. The amphitheater boasts numerous statues in addition to reliefs with a variety of subjects that constitute one of the most extensive decorative programs known in an amphitheater.[249] Of particular interest to my study are the relief depictions of wild animals. These adorned balustrades flanking the passageways to the *cavea* and it is assumed that all 80 passageways had such decoration. A total of 55 animal images are preserved, and they feature wild cats: 29 animals illustrated on the 55 preserved relief panels are lions and tigers. The wild animals are shown fighting

[247] Alvarez Martínez 1994, 266-7.
[248] The wall painting was lost but water color paintings were made soon after their discovery. The paintings coincide with the renovation of the theater to accommodate *munera* in the early 3rd century: Shear 1925, 1926; Capps 1949; Sturgeon 2004, 6.
[249] Pesce 1941; Tuck 2007.

against one another, but some of the reliefs likely depict *venationes* and possibly animal displays.[250] In addition to wild animals, other reliefs depict official processions and rituals that relate to the amphitheater, the *munus*, and myths. Tuck argues that these latter panels are not simply illustrations of myths but that they represent myths that were actually enacted in the amphitheater, for example, the punishment of Marsyas. Tuck's theory is debatable because the number of depicted myths is large and their selection is generic, indicating that the designers possibly were simply trying to fill the space with appropriate subjects rather than select specific myths that would have been suitable for reenactments. However, it remains possible that some of the images could have served as a symbolic reminder of past and future events in the amphitheater.

The wall paintings from the amphitheaters in Pompeii and Mérida are not as complex as the set of images preserved in Capua, but the reasons for installing them in the amphitheaters would have been similar. In all three cases the images would have prepared the viewer for the events to come. In particular, in Pompeii and Mérida these images would have provided a backdrop for the events. In her work on the staging of gladiatorial games, K. Coleman has drawn attention to the elaborate scenery used during games in order to imply specific landscapes or contexts.[251] Conceivably, the paintings in Mérida and Pompeii were part of such a staging, albeit in a more modest fashion.

It is likely that the images were not simply reminders of past and future events but had a further message. A more complex interpretation of the images might be difficult to prove owing to the limited visual material preserved in Pompeii and Mérida in contrast to the vast amount of material available in Capua. The reliefs of Hercules or the punishment of Marsyas from Capua would have imparted values and messages that were in fact acted out in combats in the amphitheater. For example, Hercules would have personified many values of ideal masculinity, such as courage, strength, cunning, that were also celebrated in gladiators. The punishment of Marsyas must have demonstrated the reestablishment of

[250] Tuck 2007, 258.
[251] Coleman 1990, 1993.

social order. [252] In this way the meaning of ephemeral events in the amphitheater could have been given lasting form in the images, even when there was no event taking place.

4. Domestic Contexts

The vast majority of the spectacle images with known archaeological contexts were discovered in domestic spaces. The analysis of the findspots is particularly revealing, especially when correlated with images of athletic events, for the two classes of imagery are often discussed together.[253] While images of athletic events are mostly found in public baths and less frequently in domestic contexts, exactly the opposite is the case for images of spectacle. A. Bohne has demonstrated that images of athletic completion found in houses tend to be either mythical in character, or depicted so that the athletes appear as pygmies or erotes.[254] This difference demonstrates that images of spectacle and athletic events were considered to be distinct categories and should not be conflated. Furthermore, each category had its own appropriate context: one was preferred for the decoration of private houses and the other for baths. The different contexts suggest that the images embodied particular messages. In addition those pertaining to the *munus* appear to have been useful for projecting a desired self-image of the patron.[255] It must be kept in mind that the reverse argument, i.e. the nature of the findspot can be determined by references to the type of image, is not valid.

Three types of spaces in the houses prove to have been the most likely to receive images of *venationes* or gladiatorial combat – reception areas, such as *triclinia*, connective spaces, such as corridors and courtyards, and rooms off the peristyle. The distribution of images among these spaces is fairly even. Contrary to common belief, however, the fewest number of examples in my corpus come from *triclinia*: only two mosaics were discovered in a space that can be securely identified as a dining space while another two were found in reception areas that probably but not certainly also functioned as dining rooms. Six mosaics

[252] Tuck 2007, 264; 71.
[253] Eg. Tuck 2007.
[254] Bohne 2011, 223-4; 38-41.
[255] Perry 2005, 65.

and wall paintings were found in connective spaces. Another seven mosaics were discovered in spaces directly adjoining the main peristyle of a house or, in the case of the Terrace Houses in Ephesos, an apartment.

Dining Spaces

The most ubiquitous type of reception space is the dining room. Spaces intended for dining can in many cases be readily identified, because, as mentioned above, the shape of the floor mosaics indicates the function of the space. This type of mosaic commonly features an ornate T-shaped area surrounded on three sides by a monochrome U-shaped area where the dining couches were placed. Such a design can be seen in the Sollertiana Domus in El Djem (Cat.Nr.8).[256] Like the triclinium of the Sollertiana Domus, most *triclinia* are easily accessible, and the walk from the entrance of the house to the dining room is often constructed in such a way as to impress a visitor. In this case, the visitor passed through the entrance and part of the large peristyle in order to reach the *triclinium*. The visitor would have encountered expensive building materials, furnishings, and wide open spaces and would have experienced impressive constructed views through the house. Views were of great importance in the design of Roman houses and were intended to enhance the experience of luxury and pleasure. At El Djem the visitor would have seen such a constructed view from the *triclinium*, for an apsidal fountain is set in the peristyle directly in front of the entrance to the room. The running water of the fountain would have created a soothing background sound and a cooling effect, while creating a visual focal point. The intricate floor mosaic features a geometric polychrome U-shaped design. At the center of the stem of the T, Mercury rides a ram and the child Dionysus rides a leopard surrounded by animals and fish. The bar of the T features a hunting scene, and in the threshold fish are jumping out of baskets. The most striking of the images is the mosaic in the bar of the T: an *aedicula* is surrounded by branches which frames a statue of Diana on a pedestal. Nineteen animals run from left to right and right to left around the *aedicula*. The animals are reminiscent of a hunt in the woods, and little tufts of grass and rocky outcrops symbolize a

[256] Cf also the triclinium mosaic from the so-called Orpheus villa in Miletus (Cat.Nr.26).

natural setting. However, the depicted animals include a bull, tigers, lions, bears, and stags, animals that do not naturally occur together. Because the bull is more likely to appear in an arena as part of a *venatio* or animal fight this image is frequently interpreted as an amphitheater scene. The animals are not realistically portrayed, nor does the image provide a sense of depth. Instead the animals are stacked in such a way as to provide a better view of each one, in a manner reminiscent of a catalog. Such catalog-like images are common in North Africa: they can be interpreted either as illustrations of wild animals that would have fought against each other in *munera* or as types assembled from illustrated manuals. In the Sollertiana Domus it appears that the animals were simply added to fill the space to the maximum only one animal is turned at a 90° angle and is running towards the diners.[257]

A visitor entering the room would first see this animal mosaic. Although it has been thought to refer to the amphitheater, it could have been a multivalent image that engaged the viewer on multiple levels. For example, the curved architecture of the *aedicula* in the center of the mosaic might have coordinated with the actual apsidal fountain preserved at the entrance to the *triclinium*. The fountain itself is only partially preserved, but it was curved and flanked by two columns like the *aedicula* in the mosaic. Whether the unpaved peristyle courtyard once featured plants is not known. Recent studies, however, have shown that peristyle courtyards were designed to enhance domestic luxury. Stackelberg has argued that gardens, including those in a peristyle setting, could reference ideas of power and control. It is conceivable that the Sollertiana Domus had an elaborate peristyle garden with plants that added further links between the peristyle and the mosaic.[258] Furthermore, the mosaic *aedicula* is on axis with the apsidal fountain, further mirroring the architectural element that viewers entering the room would just have passed. This effect was likely intended by the patron. It blurs the line between reality and imagination. By replicating an architectural element of his house in the mosaic, the patron was able to portray himself as the patron of the *aedicula* and the event taking place around it.

[257] Dunbabin 1978, 46-7; 184; Dulière, Slim, and Alexander 1996, 11-6; Hugoniot 2003, 14.
[258] Stackelberg 2009, 21-4; 73; 80-1; see also Kondoleon 1991, 106-7.

The El Djem mosaic might initially have appeared to the viewer as a normal hunt scene, a reading that is supported by the central position of Diana, goddess of the hunt, and the many animals in motion around her.[259] Yet, it is possible that this image was intentionally ambiguous. A hunt or a *venatio* would have reflected positively on the status and prestige of the patron. However, upon entering the room, animals more typical of a *munus* appear in the stem of the T: a prowling lioness and tiger, a roaring lion, and a bear, among others. In the viewer's mind these animals would have connected to the amphitheater.

I would like to propose another interpretation of the El Djem mosaic. The first mosaic one sees upon entering the room features many animals that are running helter skelter, as if they were being chased, but no hunter-victim pairs can be identified. The animals in the stem of the T, however, appear calmer. They are single vignettes and are walking rather than fleeing. Upon entering the room a viewer would have had to cross the mosaic with the animals in flight and, in doing so could have assumed the role of *venator*. As a successful *venato*r, the viewer would have been in the position of one who brought about order and triumphed over nature as is suggested by the calm animals set at the center of the stem of the T.

Other dining rooms are harder to identify because the mosaic flooring is not divided into a T and U-shaped space, but the functions of rooms used for receiving and entertaining guests can be identified from their location and decor. For example, the villa Nennig (Cat.Nr.43) is a very large residence with many rooms.[260] This type of villa is referred to as an axial villa featuring a U-shaped ground plan and consisting of a *pars urbana* and a *pars rustica* set along an axis.[261] One room stands out because of its central location and

[259] Futrell 1997, 113.
[260] The villa Nennig was first discovered in 1852 and excavated in the course of the 19th century. Its environs have been the focus of attention in the last 30 years. Despite the size and prominence of this villa, the villa has never been treated in its entirety. Its excavation history has received substantial treatment: see Lichardus and Bertemes 1992, 137-47 (with older literature); Echt 2003; Meynersen 2012; Zarmakoupi 2014; on the mosaic: Parlasca 1959, 35-7; Salies 1974, 174 (dating of geometric decor).
[261] See Roymans – Habermehl 2011, 83-6.

elaborate mosaic floor. A long colonnaded corridor runs along the front of the villa and can be entered by ascending several steps. A vestibule is set behind the corridor and is connected to the reception room by three entryways. The large reception room is exactly on an axis with the front entrance steps and is easily accessible. Its placement, strict axiality, and larger size indicates that this room was intended to stand out from the other rooms and was likely used for the reception of guests. The scholarship on this villa does not use a uniform term to describe this room, it is alternately referred to as an *atrium*[262], "Festsaal"[263], or "Prachtsaal".[264] These terms are all inadequate as there is no archaeological evidence that this room might have been roofed or that it functioned as a connecting space as does an *atrium*. Likewise the terms "Festsaal" or "Prachtsaal" are misleading because the term "Saal" suggests a much larger room than it actually is. Instead the room might simply be referred to as a reception room. This is the commonly used term for the central room in similar villas in Germany and Britain, as, for example, the Villa Borg, Echternach, or Bignor.[265] Not only do many of these large rooms feature mosaic floors, but they often include fountains. Remains of a fountain were excavated in the reception room in Nennig as well as in the Villa Borg.[266]

A centrally located and ornate room appears to be a common element of many villas discovered in Germany and Britain. However, the actual function of these rooms is not clear.[267] Their location and decoration suggests that such rooms were used for the reception of guests and were intended as spaces where the patron could display his wealth and social status. Thus, it is likely that guests would also have dined in such a room. By the same token, these rooms might also have served other functions related to receiving guests and fulfilling political duties. The furniture needed for all of these functions would have

[262] Echt 2003, 156.
[263] Meynersen 2012, 187: this publication features a surprising amount of incorrect information.
[264] Echt 2003, 138; Lichardus and Bertemes 1992, 144.
[265] SeeMetzler et al. 1981.
[266] Cosh 2001, 229; fn. 32; Birkenhagen 2011, 327; fig. 8.
[267] E.g. the villa in Echternach (Metzler et al. 1981), the villa Borg (Frey 2000; Birkenhagen 2011), or also the villa in Bignor (Frere et al. 1982).

been moveable and could have been set up as needed, as has also been observed in large luxury villas in Italy, e.g. Oplontis.[268]

Dining rooms typically required three couches that were placed on three sides of the room, each accommodating three people. The arrangement of diners followed strict rules with the place furthest right on the central couch, the *locus consularis*, reserved as the place of honor.[269] The mosaic floor of the reception room in Nennig is surrounded by a broad band of geometric decoration, and the figural elements are placed far enough toward the center that they were likely not covered by the couch.

It is known that Roman architects placed great value on visual axes and they constructed specific views within the house in order to be enjoyed by residents and visitors.[270] Views of landscapes were particularly popular in the houses of Roman Italy, and such views were often echoed in miniature paintings of ideal views.[271] Likewise, the architecture of the house could frame and stage views of actual landscapes in order to make the view more dramatic but also to frame and thus symbolically control nature. It is not surprising, therefore, that the villa Nennig presents particularly stunning views to the west over the Moselle River and valley, with the best view offered from the reception room. The axial plan of the villa as well as the placement of the three doorways indicates that this view was consciously staged by the patron of the house.

At the villa Nennig views were constructed in two directions. The reception room presented the visitor with an excellent view of the landscape, while at the same time the villa itself was set into the landscape so that it could be seen from afar. In addition to the main residential house the property included additional buildings for the storage and processing of agricultural products, a bath house, and a very long *porticus* that connected the main house with the bath house. The *porticus* has recently received attention in the

[268] Dunbabin 1996, 67; 70.
[269] Bek 1983; Dunbabin 1998, 89; D'Arms 1999; Dunbabin 2003, 39-40.
[270] Drerup 1959, 147-53; Clarke 1991, 14-6; Bergmann 2002, esp. 20-2.
[271] Bergmann 1991, esp. 66.

wake of recent archaeological work on the non-residential contexts of the site. There is great uncertainty as to the reason for such a long *porticus* and its exact purpose. Previous excavators noted that the east side of the *porticus* was painted in red while the interior of the *porticus* was simply white washed. It is unclear whether the west side was also painted. While the painting of the exterior of the *porticus* has led some scholars to suggest that the *porticus* was part of the exercise space of the bath and that horse races could have taken part around it, as is mentioned by both Vitruvius and Pliny the Younger[272], it is far more likely that the *porticus* must be considered in relation to the Moselle River. Statius' description of a luxurious villa along the bay of Naples owned by his patron Pollius Felix includes a steaming bath house and long porticus and he refers to the owner as a tamer and conqueror of nature. Other authors also mention that the *porticus* is an indicator of wealth and luxury.[273] The *porticus* and bath house are also prominent parts of Ausonius' description of villas along the Moselle River. He refers to the villas as the "river's ornament"[274] and recounts steaming bath houses and porticoes prominently visible from the river. It appears, therefore, that the primary function of the *porticus* of the villa Nennig was its visibility from the river. The villa, *porticus*, and bath house ran parallel to the Moselle River, and their setting would have been particularly impressive to those travelling by boat. The *porticus* was intended to impress through its great length, and it would have signaled wealth and luxury as a lavish connective unit between bath house and large villa. It may well have also symbolized to some the triumph of civilization over rugged nature.

The mosaic floor of the reception room in the villa Nennig appears to have been planned with equal precision. The mosaic is structured by very elaborate geometric patterns, and it features seven preserved scenes in vignette-style, each illustrating an individual event of the *munera*. One vignette at the entrance to the room has not

[272] Echt 2003, 142-3.
[273] See Bergmann 1991, 56; Marzano 2007, 21-2.
[274] Ausonius, The Moselle, 318.

survived.[275] The other vignettes present a progression. The initial two vignettes encountered by an entering visitor illustrate animal fights: on the left side a lion is playing with the head of a donkey accompanied by his trainer, and on the right side a tiger is in the midst of attacking a donkey that is already bleeding. The next vignette features the fight between a bear and three *venatores*. The largest scene is next and depicts a fight between two gladiators overseen by a referee. To the left of this image is another image of a *venator* who has just given a tiger the final blow, and to the right is a fight between two fully clothed figures, the so-called *paegniarii*, who are armed with whips, cudgels, and small shields. And finally, a more peaceful image brings the set of images to a close, showing two men playing musical instruments: a water organ and a tuba. The progression of events, beginning at the entrance with the animal fights, then the *venationes*, other fights between men, finally culminating in the fight between gladiators, and accompanied throughout by organ and tuba music, simulates the actual succession of events of a spectacle.

The viewer was able to relive a spectacle and its various events by walking from the entrance to the back of the room. However, the images are positioned in such a way as to be viewed best from the edges of the room. This suggests that a viewer had to walk around the edge of the mosaic to view them or that the viewer was lying on a couch. By walking around the mosaic, the viewer was able to fully relive an entire *munus*. The images capture highlights of the events but also point out the danger of the *munus* by showing both victory and defeat of humans as well as animals. Here, the central vignette of three *venatores* and a bear is remarkable as one *venator* is lying on the ground lifeless with a bear standing on top of him, emphasizing the risk of all those fighting in *munera*.

A parallel between the *munus* and a dinner party was the hierarchy of the seating, something that the mosaic seems to directly reference. As already described in chapter 2, the seating at the *munus* was very strictly regulated and spectators were assigned places according to their wealth – thus insuring that individuals of equal status kept within their

[275] It was replaced by a modern plaque commemorating the discovery and conservation of the mosaic; see Meynersen 2012.

social circles.[276] A similar hierarchy pertained to the seating at banquets: the highest ranking guests reclined on the central *kline* and the lowest ranking one to the right of the central *kline*. The seating in the amphitheater appears to be mirrored in the positioning of the *kline* for the spectators of the mosaic. Likewise, the hierarchy of the seating is represented by the placement of the vignettes in mosaic: the diners along the long sides would have faced two small vignettes while the diners along the short end of the room would not only have had a better view of the main scene, the gladiatorial fight, but would also have been able to see a total of three images as well as the vignettes on the side. In this way not only was the *munus* recreated, but the placement of the spectacle images reinforced the hierarchical order of the different dining positions.

As in other parts of the house, the mosaic floor provides further evidence that the patron not only placed great value on hierarchy but also on staged views: the turn of the bodies, the arms, and gazes of individual figures and animals on the mosaic appear to direct the viewer towards one point, the far back corner of the room, considered to be the place of honor.[277] In particular, the *venator* who has just killed the tiger, the tiger that is attacking a donkey, and the two musicians are all looking in that same direction. This direction is also indicated, although in a less obvious manner, by the *retiarius* on the left and the two standing *venatores* in the central vignette. This visual axis could have further suggested a hierarchy and social status comparable to the amphitheater: during the *munus* the benefactor would have held a more visually prominent seat and would have been honored as well as viewed by the participants and spectators alike. The patron of the games was the figure of honor at the games, and his largess was intended to elevate the patron's social status and prestige, just as the setting of the villa and luxurious banquet would have reinforced his status among his friends and clients.

[276] Gunderson 1996, 123-6; Clarke 2003, 130; Revell 2009, 167-72; Fagan 2011, 80-120.
[277] Although the placement of the vignettes makes it likely that the room was used as a *triclinium*, the room could have also been used to receive clients, in which case the patron would have likely assumed a seat towards the end of the hall similar to the dining events.

While the visual axis described by the gaze of the figures might be ignored as accidental, the exceptionally fine quality of the mosaic supports such a close reading of the mosaic's composition. The individual figures, in particular the gladiators, are placed carefully and minute details such as the individual muscles and patterns on the gladiator's loin cloth are carefully rendered with particularly small stones. Overall, the mosaic from Nennig is one of the finest mosaics in the entire Roman Empire, and its location on the edge of that Empire should not discourage us from taking note of all its formal complexities. All elements of the image and accompanying room were planned carefully for the self-promotion of the patron. I argue that the mosaic invokes the memory of a spectacle in all of its facets, including that of social hierarchy and the honoring of the benefactor of the games.

Connective Spaces

Scenes of spectacle were particularly common in spaces that I refer to as connective. These include corridors, porticoes, and courtyards. These spaces were created to link various sets of rooms and areas of the house and served as meeting points of different paths through the house. Connective spaces were frequented by everyone living in the house and by visitors. They were likely the most frequented spaces of the house. However, in contrast to reception rooms, they would have been experienced while moving through the space rather than by spending great lengths of time in them, and they are therefore characterized as being dynamic spaces.[278] The decoration of connective spaces had to reflect their multi-functional nature and aid in directing movement through the house.[279] Clarke has shown that figures as part of floor mosaics were essential elements that directed viewers through spaces.[280]

The idea that the mosaic flooring directed movement has also been employed by Muth in her compelling analysis of the Great Hunt Mosaic in the Villa del Casale in Piazza

[278] Scott 1994, 90; Kondoleon 1995, 192-3; Muth 1999, 193-4; Clarke 2014.
[279] Muth 1998, 61-3; Molholt 2008.
[280] Clarke 1979, electronic reprint 2006, para 8-9.

Armerina (Cat.Nr.68).[281] The extensive mosaic of the Great Hunt fills the space of a long corridor almost 60 m in length. The corridor prominently connects a large courtyard with the so-called Basilica, likely used as an audience hall. It also leads to other rooms on either side of the hall that appear to have been of a more private nature, and to a *triconch* hall that might have been used for more intimate dinners. The corridor mosaic had multiple audiences and purposes: it was supposed to direct visitors towards the Basilica and also display the wealth and status of the owner.

Muth argues that, in addition to directing attention towards the Basilica, the mosaic also created boundaries marking quarters that were only accessible to particular people. The mosaic is densely set with a variety of scenes illustrating the hunt and capture of wild animals and their transport by ship and wagon. These wild animals were intended for public spectacles, and they would have been publicly hunted in *venationes* for the entertainment of the people. The high cost of the exotic animals reflected positively on the patron of the games and the effort he had made to acquire particularly rare or ferocious animals. This honorific aspect is of great importance in the Great Hunt mosaic and is reinforced by the *dominus* and his retinue who are set at the center of the mosaic with the animals and hunters all moving towards them. The center also aligns with the entrance to the so-called Basilica where the patron received clients. The mosaic thus provides a first glimpse of the *dominus* as the conqueror of the animal world and master of a very rich animal hunt. Notably the movement of the animals and hunters towards the Basilica was mirrored by the clients who walked towards the Basilica entrance. The mosaic shows a continual progression of events that move towards the center from both ends. The hunt begins at the far ends of the mosaic and continues with the capture and transport of the animals before finally arriving at the figure of the *dominus*. The flow of events is marked by the doors and stairs that open onto the mosaic; as a result, the northern most set of stairs leading up to the corridor from the courtyard marks the break between the wild and dangerous hunt and the transport of the captured animals. The battle between captors and wild animals

[281] Muth 1999.

illustrates the unbridled force of nature in stark contrast to the well-organized and calm transport of the wild animals. Muth suggests that the corridor from the stairways on the side to the entrance of the Basilica was in this way marked as the civilized, organized, and safe path, in part due to the efforts of the *dominus*.[282] The intersection of the northern staircase from the courtyard and the corridor had to be further defined because a doorway to a more private area of the house was set opposite the staircase. Particularly ferocious animal encounters are set in front of that doorway, and a person entering these rooms would have passed over scenes contrasting the civilized and calm animal transport with wild and fierce animals. Muth refers to this contrast as the visualization of the "Gegenwelt", a world contrary to the civilized world of the *dominus*. The depiction of the "Gegenwelt", or the ferocious and dangerous animals, is reduced to the part of the corridor that was dead-space and where no further doorways opened onto the corridor. The same situation occurs on the south side of the corridor; however, more doorways open onto this space; and the depiction of "Gegenwelten" is reduced to a very small part of the corridor. As in the north, the doorways in the south also illustrate the most dangerous encounters between animals and humans. Also striking is the placement of official figures: the three groups of such figures are placed directly at the top of the three stairways marking the transition from the courtyard to the corridor. The central group with the *dominus* marked the entrance to the Basilica while the official in the north is shown whipping a servant and the group in the south is simply standing. These figures attest to the fact that the mosaic was very consciously planned out with greater consideration of the movement through the space.

The Great Hunt mosaic at the Piazza Armerina is an exceptional example and one of the latest included in this corpus of spectacle imagery. The villa is also very large, and the decor is so elaborate that some scholars have argued that it was the residence of a Roman emperor.[283] The villa was likely in fact owned by a high ranking elite, but the confusion over ownership speaks to the exceptional quality of the mosaics and size of the villa. The villa

[282] Muth 1999, 201.
[283] Muth 1999, 189.

was decorated by some of the best craftsman of the time and thus conclusions gained about the decor of the villa might not be fully comparable to the decoration of most other houses mentioned in this study.

The House of Dionysos on Paphos boasts an extensive *venatio* mosaic (Cat.Nr.35) that is located on three sides of a courtyard. The fourth side was wider and featured four panels with depictions of myths (Pyramos and Thisbe; Dionysos and Ikarios and "the First Wine-Drinkers"; Poseidon and Amymone; and Apollo and Daphne).[284] The mosaics of the courtyard present two problems. The first is that the orientation of the mosaics in the individual porticoes is inconsistent because in two cases the mosaics face the courtyard and the other two face outwards. The second is that it is unclear whether there is an underlying common theme that ties the images in the courtyard together.

In order to better understand the orientation it is necessary to recreate the viewing experience of someone first entering the house. The entrance to the courtyard was in the southwestern corner, and a visitor would have first encountered the *porticus* mosaic with the mythological panels. Facing the courtyard, these were meant to be seen by those entering rather than by those exiting the *triclinium*. The three hunt mosaics would not have been seen immediately by those first entering the courtyard. The mosaics of the northern and southern porticoes are oriented towards the entrance of the courtyard. In contrast, the mosaic of the eastern *porticus* does not face the entrance and instead would have been best viewed by those coming from the eastern part of the house. The placement and viewing angles of these mosaics might be indicative of patterns of movement, especially

[284] Kondoleon 1991, 111, 1995, 147-8: The panel of Dionysos and Ikarios was set on axis with the entrance to the *triclinium* and the topic of wine alludes to the function of the *triclinium* and precludes the banquet. Kondoleon offers an interpretation of the images of the entire house and tries to relate the theme of water to the mixing of wine in the Dionysiac image. The geographic location of the house might offer a more compelling interpretation: the house was located on a cap along the coast of Cyprus and was likely greatly affected by the close proximity of the sea and thus by water. She further suggests that the hunt mosaics could relate to the Dionysiac images because of the combination of Dionysiac festivals and ludi romani. However, this interpretation is not convincing and the basis for the argumentation is incorrect. The tradition cited by Kondoleon took place in Republican Rome and the situation had changed considerably by the 2nd and 3rd century CE especially in a region as remote as Cyprus. In addition the sponsorship of *munera* was conducted very differently in the various provinces.

since additional ornate rooms likely used for receiving guests were located in the north and would have been accessed via the northern *porticus*. The northern as well as the southern porticoes are oriented in such a way that a person entering the courtyard would have been able to walk towards the mosaics and always see them right side up. If visitors were to follow the northern or southern hunt images, the correct viewing angle would have been disrupted once they reached the eastern end of the mosaics and they would have had to turn in order to see the mosaics of the eastern *porticus* right side up again. The disruption in the viewing experience seems to mark a visual barrier that coincides with a functional division of the house. While the western and northern rooms appear to have been more ornate and were likely used for receiving guests, the eastern part of the house is thought to have been of a more private nature. Thus the orientation of the mosaic panels might invite visitors to enter certain spaces while also creating visual barriers that mark areas that were reserved for household members.

The hunt images in the three porticoes each comprise two hunter-animal groups and multiple animals chasing each other. The animals include those of exotic and also local origin, such as wild boar, horse, lion, tiger, bull, rams, among others. Like other *venatio* images, each *venator* is hunting a different animal, emphasizing the great variety of animals. The different groups of animals and hunters are not moving in the same direction and thus do not seem to indicate a single flow of movement.[285] In most cases the mosaicist has refrained from showing actual violence with one particularly gruesome exception: in the northern *porticus* a wild cat is carrying the head of a horse or ass and the headless animal is left standing in mid-air behind the wild cat. The wild cat is walking towards an unusual arch that is commonly interpreted as a reference to amphitheater architecture.[286] The image of a wild cat with the head of another animal is a fairly common image type that appears in

[285] Kondoleon 1991, 273: suggests that based on the movement of the hunters the flow of the images in the northern *porticus* is to the right, and in the eastern *porticus* is to the left while the direction of the southern *porticus* is ambiguous.
[286] Kondoleon 1991, 107.

many different parts of the Roman Empire (see also chapter 3, 66).[287] It is unclear whether this unusual part of the mosaic carries further meaning. However, it might visually highlight the division of space and mark the passage to the more private quarters of the house, which may also be indicated by the arch.

The interpretation of these mosaic panels is particularly difficult because the location of the doorways has not been preserved. The placement of the doorways would have provided essential information about visual axes and the movement through the rooms and traffic patterns. The mosaics of the western *porticus* clearly illustrate that the mosaics were placed so as to complement the design of the house. Here the panel of Ikaros and Dionysos stands out because it is larger than the other panels of the western *porticus*, and it is placed on axis with another mosaic inside the *triclinium*. A further detail emphasizes the connection between the *porticus* mosaic and the *triclinium*: the subject of the mosaic hints at the function of the adjoining room. A similar connection may also be observed in the eastern *porticus*. A one man-animal group in the hunt panels stands out. It is located in the center of the eastern *porticus* and, unlike the other *venatores*, this hunter wears a billowing cloak. He is shown fighting a leopard as is indicated by the spots on the animal's coat. The group is also positioned in front of a room, and although the doorway is not preserved, it is very likely that this figure served to mark the entrance to the adjoining room. Placed at the center of the central hunt mosaic this panel seems to represent the culmination of the previous scenes and show either the *venator*, who was in charge, or the most decorated fighter. The adjoining room could have had a wide range of uses, but the central placement of the hunter-animal group, the cloak, and the leopard, an especially exotic and thus expensive animal, could therefore be directed towards the patron of the house and his position within the society of Paphos. The context of the hunt might suggest control and power, the encounter with a wild cat implies courage and the type of animal, namely a leopard, would be indicative of great financial means. Its location marking the

[287] Kondoleon 1995, 298.

transitional space from an intimate to a public space of the house might be a particularly apt place to reinforce the social position of the patron and family.

Kondoleon has argued that the hunt panels are based on actual hunts and might refer to a spectacle that the patron of the house sponsored at some point. Her main argument for considering the hunt scenes as related to real events is the presence of trees, boulders, tufts of grass, and other nature elements. These elements are reminiscent of literary descriptions of aspects of spectacle events, namely the so-called *silvae*, or the recreation of woods for the staging of more realistic hunts.[288] The addition of trees and other natural elements, however, is not as unusual as is suggested by Kondoleon, and they are not convincing indicators of whether the image relates to an actual event or not.[289] Although there are only a few comparisons for the addition of trees and other vegetal elements to spectacle scenes, e.g. El Djem (Cat.Nr.8) and Pompeii (Cat.Nr.71), they are commonly used to subdivide individual scenes in a larger image, such as on sarcophagi or on the friezes of the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. Thus the addition of natural elements might simply frame separate scenes, as in other media. There are other indications that the images might not be direct representations of a real event. The animals in the mosaic are very poorly executed and some are barely recognizable, such as the bear to the right of the *venator* who wears a cloak that resembles a shaggy lion: viewers would not have been convinced. It is more likely that he was paying tribute to a favorite Roman form of entertainment by showing a range of animals from around the Roman Empire. It must be kept in mind that the amphitheater of Paphos is located in relatively close proximity of the House of Dionysos and that spectacles probably took place at regular intervals in the city. Thus the images would have reminded viewers of these events. The prominent placement of the images within the house indicates the importance that the

[288] Kondoleon 1995, 312-4; see also Coleman's work (Coleman 1990, 1993) which is not incorporated into Kondoleon's argument.

[289] Trees, grain stalks and other vegetal elements are often used to frame individual scenes of a longer frieze or animate the background of an image, e.g. wall painting from the amphitheater in Pompeii (Cat.Nr. 71). This is not particularly common in spectacle images and appears more frequently on sarcophagi, or also the columns of Trajan and Antoninus Pius and also appears in the Eastern Mediterranean, e.g. Zeugma, House of Poseidon, Cat.Nr. 79.

patron accorded this event.[290] The images were likely inspired by the events but it is not possible to state whether they refer to an actual munus or not.

The mosaics from Piazza Armerina, like those at Paphos show that spectacle images were thought to be well suited to transitional or connective spaces. The hunt scenes created movement and invited a visitor to follow the flow of the depicted movement. At the same time the layout of the pavements could create visual barriers and mark accessible spaces or spaces reserved for people more closely connected to the owner. The main purpose of the spectacle mosaics in such connective spaces might, in fact, have been to direct people through the structure rather than to transmit profound messages about the patron. Spaces where visitors spent time would have been better suited for this purpose.

Not only mosaics but also wall paintings have been discovered in the context of connective spaces. A few were found in long hallways, such as the *cryptoporticus* of villas in Meikirch (Cat.Nr.60) and Mechern (Cat.Nr.40). However, the archaeological contexts and the paintings at these two sites are only poorly preserved. Two other examples that come from very similar contexts are in better condition. Painting was discovered on the courtyard walls of both the *domus* de Vésone in Périgueux (Cat.Nr.38) and the House of Actius Anicetus in Pompeii (Cat.Nr.70) .[291] The example from Pompeii is well known as the *Riot in the Amphitheater*. It features the fight between the Pompeians and the Nucerians in 59 CE at a *munus*. What is less well known is that additional paintings featuring pairs of gladiators in combat were discovered in 1868 to the left and right of this painting. Today only black-and-white sketches of the gladiator paintings survive. Due to the unique theme of the amphitheater painting, which portrays a documented historical incident, scholarship on it abounds. One of the most recent and very compelling analyses of the image is that of Clarke.[292] Clarke's discussion is convincing because he takes the entire architectural context into account in order to get a better sense of the former owner and patron of these images.

[290] See also Kondoleon 1991, 109.
[291] Fröhlich 1991, 241-7 (with earlier literature); La Regina 2001, 333; Clarke 2003, 152-8; Jacobelli 2003, 71-3.
[292] Clarke 2003, 156-8.

He points out that the house was fairly small and modest so that the owner is not likely to have been the sponsor of a spectacle or to have been in a position to entertain the people who would have been in charge of such an event. In contrast to other scholars, he does not argue that the former owner was one of the gladiators involved in the unfortunate events at the spectacle but instead posits that the owner could have been part of one of the *collegia* involved in the actual fight against the Nucerians. The amphitheater painting would have memorialized the events, and the gladiator pairings on either side would have reminded viewers of the sport the *collegia* admired. Especially in view of the ten year ban on spectacles in Pompeii imposed by Nero, the image could also be simply viewed as a souvenir of the *munera* and a document of the event that led to the ban.

Clarke focuses on the unique placement of the *Riot in the Amphitheater* painting on the wall of the peristyle courtyard. However, the placement of the image is not as singular as he assumes. The wall paintings from the *domus* de Vésone in Périgueux and the house of Actius Anicetus are surprisingly similar in two respects: the paintings featured a variety of pairs of gladiators, and they were located on the back wall of a peristyle courtyard. The gladiator painting from the *domus* de Vésone was large, with images that have been called megalographic; the sizes of the gladiator paintings from the house of Actius Anicetus are not documented. In the *domus* de Vésone, graffiti naming the individual gladiators were also discovered and appear to refer to specific gladiators, possibly within the context of a specific event, but the small fragments did not permit a reconstruction of the full text. Although it is thought that gladiators were named, it may be that this was a dedicatory text. In addition to the gladiatorial encounters, the wall painting in the domus de Vésone also featured a frieze of animal hunts and *venatio* scenes. Its prominent placement on the back wall of the peristyle courtyard would have ensured that all passing through the peristyle were able see the painting. As in Pompeii the back wall of the house in Périgueux does not appear to have been visible from the street.

The wall painting in the *domus* de Vésone was likely completed in the late 1st century CE. However, in a later building phase, around the mid-2nd century CE, the wall was

removed and the house was expanded. The location of this house is of note as it was located in the center of the ancient town and the city's major temple was located immediately to the east of domus de Vésone. The paintings and their placement have been the subject of studies concerning the function of the entire house and the identity of its patron, especially due to the proximity of the cult. Bouet has recently argued that the house was a *schola* of a *collegium* interested in spectacles based on the size of the house, its proximity to the cult area of the town, and the discovery of objects and statuary related to the adjacent cult in the *domus* de Vésone itself.[293] These conclusions are convincing in relation to the later phases of the house from the mid-2nd century onward, but there is less evidence that the house served as a *schola* in its earlier phases. Barbet has compared the gladiatorial images to other Roman megalographic images and concluded that the images of this size were more common in public contexts and thus that the *domus* was likely connected to the temple. However, spectacle images are highly unusual in public contexts, and a closer look at the comparanda provided by Barbet shows that two out of the three images she cites cannot be considered megalographic.[294] Instead of the size of the figures being indicative of the function of the space, it is more likely that it was simply meant to ensure that the figures were visible to all passing through the courtyard. The gladiatorial images, therefore, do not provide conclusive evidence that the house already had a public function in the 1st and early 2nd century. It is more likely that the house had a more private residence before it later gained public importance in connection to the adjoining cult.

Because the wall painting from Périgueux is very fragmented, it is not possible to reconstruct the entire composition thus, an in-depth interpretation of the imagery is impossible. That there was considerable interest in spectacles in the town is clear from an amphitheater that was constructed in the 1st century CE and from fragments of another spectacle scene, including a gladiator, that were discovered in another building in

[293] Bouet 2001, 241-60; esp. 56-59.
[294] Barbet 1999, 23: cites the following comparanda: paintings from amphitheater in Pompeii (original size unclear), wall painting from amphitheater in Mérida (average fragment height 0.75 m, figure height 0.5 m) , paintings from baths in Leptis Magna. Comparable beast megalographies have been discovered in several Pompeian private houses, see Leach 2004, 130-2.

Périgueux. The precise archaeological context of this image is not clear. Although the reasons that led the patron of the *domus* de Vésone to have scenes from a spectacle painted on his garden wall remain unknown, the examples from Pompeii and from Périgueux indicate that the wall of a peristyle courtyard was not an entirely unusual place for such paintings. It has already been shown that connective spaces, such as courtyard walkways, were favored places for spectacle mosaics.

The placement of a wall painting on the far wall of the courtyard would have been experienced differently: the megalographic figures would have been seen by all passing through the courtyard and would not have organized the space and movement through the space in the same way as a mosaic might. While the figures in mosaics are often smaller and require the viewer to step closer, the wall painting appears to have been proportioned in a way to be visible from multiple angles and from a greater distance. A further difference between mosaic and wall painting might be suggested based on the nature of the medium: wall painting was less durable and could be changed more quickly while the placement of a mosaic was a painstaking endeavor, and the mosaic often remained in place for several generations. The difference in production time and cost could allow for wall paintings to reflect current events, such as the painting in the house of Actius Anicetus, or to provide references to popular gladiators. In contrast, the longer production time and cost of mosaics might have led patrons to create images that not only reminded viewers of an event but also included a message flattering to the patron and directed to the future.

Other Ornate Rooms

Rooms with an exceptional amount of decoration were not all used for banqueting. Nor does the presence of spectacle imagery necessarily indicate that a room was a dining room. The point is demonstrated by an analysis of mosaics in the Villa in Bad Kreuznach and the Bignor Villa.

The villa in Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr.57) boasts a room that has long been identified as a dining room. However, this function is not likely. The villa is one of the largest Roman houses discovered to date in Germany. It has a square ground plan with a large central

courtyard that imitates those of Italian peristyle villas. At the center of the south wing is a very large room with an apse. This is one of the most ornate rooms of the villa, featuring a mosaic floor depicting Oceanos and multiple scenes of maritime trade as well as a large marble fountain set in the middle of the floor. Small openings were discovered in the flooring of the apse indicating that there was a wooden bench along the wall of the apse. This room has been securely identified as a *stibadium*, a late antique Roman type dining room. Here the diners reclined on a C-shaped bench looking out toward the center of the room where performances took place.[295] Another very large room is centrally located in the west wing. This room had floor heating and might have functioned as a winter dining room, in contrast to the apsed dining room, which was not heated and would have only been used in the summer time.[296] These two rooms stand out owing to their central placement and easy accessibility: visitors could directly enter them from the colonnaded *porticus* of the courtyard. The placement of these two rooms contrasts with a third room that scholars commonly refer to as the dining room. Located in the southwest corner of the villa it could not be directly accessed from the courtyard. This room has been of particular interest to scholars because of its elaborate floor mosaic that shows various scenes from a *munus*. The room is smaller than the other two reception rooms, but it was heated and had a rectangular annex at the far end. The gladiatorial mosaic covers the floor of the main room while the annex contains a mosaic with geometric motifs. The literature on the villa commonly refers to the annex as the *triclinium*. However, the annex measures 3.80 x 2.35 m, and typical Roman couches were at least 1.50 m, sometimes even 2m wide, and so this annex would have been too small to fit three couches.[297] It is equally unlikely that couches would have been regularly set up in the central part of the room since they would have covered large parts of the mosaic. The location of the room and the dimensions of the mosaic indicate that this room was likely not used as a dining room, but it is likely that the patron of the house used it to receive guests and clients for other purposes. The function of

[295] Ehmig 2005, 179; See Ellis 1991, 119-20; Dunbabin 1996, 74; Ellis 1997; Dunbabin 2003.
[296] See Cosh 2001, 219.
[297] On couch sizes: Witts 2000, 295 (ca. 1.50 m); Dunbabin 2003, 38 (2.2/2.4 x 1.5 m).

the annex is not clear. Similar spaces have been identified as libraries in British villas, but the annex in Bad Kreuznach appears to be too large to have functioned as a book case.[298] Instead, a bed might have been placed in the annex, and if so, the room could have functioned as a *cubiculum* where the patron could have slept or conducted private business.[299]

Because they could serve as private meeting places, *cubicula* are often very ornate rooms. As in other reception rooms, the decor needed to reflect positively on the patron's wealth, status, and learning. It is not surprising that the villa of Bad Kreuznach would also include a cubiculum where the owner of this large complex could have received his clients, as is also indicated by the floor heating. The large size of the villa in comparison to other residences excavated in Germany suggests that the owner was wealthy and likely was a high-ranking figure within the society of the immediate area. U. Ehmig recently suggested that the owner of the villa was a merchant, possibly dealing in eastern Mediterranean products, given the presence of a large number of amphorae from the eastern Mediterranean as well as the depiction of amphorae on the Oceanos-mosaic. While speculative, this theory provides a sense of the type of person who had an Oceanos-mosaic and contemporary gladiator mosaic installed in in his villa.[300]

The gladiator mosaic is precisely planned: a round vignette, set at the center, is surrounded by eight vignettes with figural compositions that form a circle. The circle of vignettes is set into a square, and its corners are filled with four square vignettes. The square corner vignettes feature fights between animals while the vignettes forming a circle show alternating *venatio* and gladiator scenes. The central vignette was heavily damaged and has been reconstructed, but it appears to have originally shown the hunt of wild animals. The scene of the central vignette faced the annex of the room, probably marking an important visual axis of the room from the patron's couch. The other vignettes required

[298] See Witts 2000, 298.
[299] Riggsby 1997, esp. 41-3; Anguissola 2010; Carucci 2012.
[300] Ehmig 2005.

the viewer to walk around the entire room in order to see all of them. The wide variety of animals and human figures makes for a particularly striking composition. The *venatio* scenes feature four animals known to have been favorites in the arena: the bear, boar, tiger, and bull. However, the composition of the individual scenes is fairly standardized: all four *venatores* are victorious and manage to kill the animals by spearing them in the chest or between the shoulder blades. With the exception of the tiger these are animals that the patron of Bad Kreuznach would have been able to hunt. In the gladiator vignettes variation in the type of gladiator appears to be the most essential aspect as the scenes themselves are composed in similar ways: the gladiator on the left generally has his back turned towards the viewer, and the gladiator on the right is usually facing the viewer. The animal fight vignettes also show a variety of animals but little variation in their composition: an aggressor jumps on the back of an often larger animal. Thus, a bear attacks a stag, a leopard (?) jumps on the back of a wild boar, a female tiger catches a donkey, and a lion holds a bull. The mosaic features common animals and spectacle elements that appear on many other gladiatorial scenes as well: felines, bulls and bears were always favorites of the *munus*.[301] Interestingly, the human participants in the Bad Kreuznach mosaic are always shown as victors, and there is no hint of the high risk of the games. Overall, the mosaic appears to allude to a particularly elaborate *munus* with four gladiator pairings and a great variety of animals from all parts of the Roman Empire. It is likely that the patron of this mosaic mainly wished to show the most exciting events of an ideal *munus* by selecting an exciting variety of animal species and gladiators, and by showing the human participants as victors and as individuals in command. The composition of the scenes is less exciting. It appears that there was less effort expended on arranging the figures so as to create suspense, as for example in the gladiatorial image in Nennig.

Although this *cubiculum* was likely used for receiving clients and guests, it is unclear who would have seen this mosaic. The emphasis on variety of animals and gladiators rather than on stimulating attack compositions might indicate that the patron wanted to

[301] See also Toynbee 1973, 132.

demonstrate his knowledge of the *munus* and show a particularly elaborate, and thus expensive, event. By avoiding human casualties and showing the gladiators and *venatores* as dominant figures the mosaic speaks to human authority, and in particular that of Roman authority.

The subject of room function and use has recently been at the center of debate in British scholarship on Romano-British villas. The debate was sparked by reception rooms in British villas and a general scholarly tendency to identify more elaborate rooms as dining or banquet halls without closely examining the actual evidence.[302] Witts demonstrated that a functional analysis of a room must always take the dimensions of the space into consideration.[303] As one of the largest known villas discovered in Britain, the villa in Bignor (Cat.Nr.28) is important. The villa features a room (room 3) with an apse that is demarcated by a frieze-style mosaic with erotes-gladiators in combat. The shape of the room and the mosaic led the excavators in 1812/1813 to refer to the room as the *triclinium*. However, the size of the space is insufficient for a *stibadium* couch. Additionally, the room was not easily accessible. It was located in the northwestern corner of the house removed from the main axes of the house. In his discussion of seasonal dining rooms Cosh argues that, despite the floor heating in the apsed room in the Bignor villa, this room was likely not a winter dining space. Instead Cosh supports Witts' theory that this space was used as a quiet study space by the patron of the villa. The even lighting from windows on two sides of the room would have made it ideal for reading.[304]

The gladiator mosaic in Bignor is a curious composition. It is unique in that it depicts gladiators as erotes with wings.[305] The frieze-like composition illustrates a sequence of episodes in the combat between a *secutor* and *a retiarius*. It begins on the left-hand side with the two gladiators facing each other and a referee overseeing the fight. In the next scene the referee intervenes but the scene is somewhat unclear because one gladiator is

[302] See Ellis 1995; Witts 2000; Cosh 2001.
[303] Witts 2000, 292.
[304] Witts 2000, 296-8; Cosh 2001, 226; 36; Neal and Cosh 2009, 489-97.
[305] Only one other mosaic featuring gladiators with wings is known and comes from Miletus (see Cat.Nr. 26).

not fully visible due to a damage. The gladiators appear to be arming themselves in the next scene – a *secutor* is leaning on his shield, a *retiarius* is putting on a helmet, and the referee is leading a *retiarius* who is carrying a net and trident. The last scene illustrates the defeat of the *retiarius* who is lying on the ground with blood streaming from his thigh and the *secutor* is advancing towards him. The helmet of the secutor lies on the ground behind the secutor. The image is an entertaining depiction of a gladiator combat from the beginning to end, but the scenes are not in order. The depiction of a combat from start to finish is very uncommon, especially in Britain where single gladiator depictions are most common. The Bignor mosaic clearly emphasizes a single combat from start to finish and illustrates exciting elements of the fight. Thus the frieze might have been intended to explain a gladiator combat or simply to recall the key elements of a combat. The depiction of the gladiators as small and rounded cupids rather than as large, imposing men is odd and it appears to remove the image into a mythological realm. [306] Illustrating gladiators as cupids could have also been an attempt at humor and it depicts the gladiatorial encounter with surprising realism. The area located in front of the gladiator mosaic is decorated with geometric motifs and multiple small vignettes filled with dancing naked erotes holding spears and shields. Thus, wings on the gladiators and the armor of the naked erotes connect the different elements of the mosaic.

The parallels between the villas at Bad Kreuznachh and Bignor are striking. The size of the villas, the placement of the rooms with gladiator mosaics, and the fact that both rooms were heated suggest the possibility that both rooms were used as *cubicula* where the patron received clients and managed his estates.

5. Conclusion

No investigation of visual evidence is complete without an assessment of the context of the imagery. A study of the known contexts of spectacle imagery provides several important insights into the placement of these images and viewers' experience of them. Previous studies have often taken archaeological reports at face value without reassessing

[306] On a prominent frieze with cupids from the Casa dei Vettii, see De Angelis 2011.

the site plans based on current approaches to the functions of Roman domestic spaces. This chapter draws on a series of well-published case studies that illustrate the wide range of contexts in which spectacle images appear and underscores the need for more holistic approaches grounded in the study of archaeological context.

The most important conclusion of this chapter is the fact that spectacle images are most frequently discovered in domestic contexts or contexts related to the *munus*, notably the amphitheater itself. However, contrary to common belief, spectacle images were not predominantly found in dining spaces or any other specific domestic context but, instead were discovered in a variety of rooms and spaces, including hallways, courtyards, *cubicula*, and rooms of unknown but more representative function.

The predominance of domestic contexts suggests that notions of propriety were attached to spectacle images that made them ill-suited for most non-domestic contexts. In contrast images of athletic events are almost exclusively found in public contexts. It is possible that this difference was rooted in the organization and financing of *munera* and athletic events. Although *munera* were open to the public, they were originally private events that continued to be privately financed by public officials. Athletic events, however, were organized and financed with public funds, making visual references to them ideal for baths and other public venues. Thus it appears that private financing made gladiatorial games a subject matter appropriate only for domestic contexts. Furthermore, athletics were of Greek origin and although the contests were introduced into Roman daily life, it is possible that their Greek origin barred them from being an acceptable subject matter in private contexts, at least in the Roman west.[307] Thus the issue of private sponsorship and their Roman origin made gladiatorial games a subject matter appropriate for domestic contexts and for patrons wishing to demonstrate their "romanness".

The images appear to have been tailored to fit a variety of architectural contexts. Hallways and courtyards were decorated with images that encouraged the flow of

[307] For a more detailed discussion of Roman attitudes to Greek athleticism, see Newby 2002, 2005.

movement and thus featured frieze-like compositions with men and animals in movement. Here, it was possible to express ideas of wealth and status through the rich imagery and to create visual boundaries through specific visual markers, such as a switch in orientation or a change in the theme of the image. It was also possible to enhance certain messages through the composition of the image. This was most convincingly shown by the mosaic from the villa in Nennig where the figures of the mosaic appear to focus on the left rear corner of the room, the most prominent position for guests and hosts during banquets. The importance of the focal point seems to equate the person occupying this place with a *munerarius* or financer of a *munus*. The visual axis of the figures, the theme of the mosaic, and the framed view of the landscape from the *triclinium* suggest social hierarchy, human control over nature, and the dominance of Roman culture.

Because the production of wall paintings is faster and less involved than the production of mosaics it is possible to posit that a wall painting might have been more directly affected by contemporary events in an amphitheater than a mosaic. Nonetheless, as I have shown, directly relating the depictions with actual events can be fraught. Exceptions, however, do exist, as for example in the wall painting of the *Riot in the Amphitheater* from the house of Actius Anicetus in Pompeii. On the whole, patrons appear to have been interested in showing their involvement in the games and their appreciation of the values that the fighters embodied. Preferences with respect to these images are also linked to regional conditions, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Provincial Preferences

That images of Roman spectacle have been discovered across the entire Mediterranean indicates that the games were widely enjoyed. Although spectacles took place in roughly the same manner, every area of the Empire was culturally somewhat different. It is not surprising to notice that images of spectacle were not evenly dispersed across the Roman Empire and appear to have had different connotations depending on the region where the image was discovered. The historical, political, and commercial background of each region played a role in the way Roman forms of spectacle were perceived by the local communities and integrated into their lives. For example, in their studies of gladiatorial combat in the Greek provinces, Carter and Mann have both suggested that references to gladiators incorporate Greek ideas of athleticism and myth.[308] This connection is demonstrated particularly clearly in the appearance of gladiators with names of heroes and mythical figures or the inclusion of symbols of victory that are commonly used for athletic competitions. In contrast, V. Hope has shown that inscriptions of gladiators in Gaul are similar to those of soldiers.[309] The army was more visible in Gaul and Germania than in other areas of the Empire, and many spectacle images from these provinces come from areas that are located along the *limes*. Gladiatorial combat was not only connected to the army but also to ideas of *romanitas* and the demonstration of a Roman identity. This is exemplified at Bad Kreuznach where the villa was constructed according to Roman standards of luxury and wealth, despite its remote location along the Roman border.

A discussion of gladiatorial combat in the Roman Empire is inherently connected to ideas of Romanization. As an event known to have originated in the city of Rome and spread from there throughout the Roman Empire, the *munus*, and in particular gladiatorial combat,

[308] Carter 2009; Mann 2009.
[309] Hope 2001b, 2001c.

is often claimed by scholars to be a marker of Romanization and used as a measure to assess the degree to which the local population had "become Roman". As stated by G. Woolf: "The adoption of gladiatorial combats and Roman styles of bathing in the east are, in all these respects, typical examples of Romanization."[310] However, since the notion Romanization is highly contested and even the definition of the term is problematic,[311] the term will not figure prominently in this chapter. Yet the issues the term attempts to describe raise important questions that are at the heart of this chapter. Rather than present a single theory explaining the presence of spectacle imagery in domestic contexts, in the following arguments I draw on L. Revell's work on local identities and local responses to Roman Imperialism.[312] Although Revell is more interested in the use of public space as a place where hierarchies were reframed and the meaning of one's Roman identity was generated, many of her ideas are applicable to understanding provincial conceptualization of *Romanness*. In particular Revell views the Roman population as engaged in a continually changing discourse on what it means to be Roman, a discourse based on such factors, as past experiences, sex, background, social status, etc. This approach identifies a great deal of variability and raises awareness of the many different possible forms that Roman identity could and did take.[313]

This chapter first provides an overview of the distribution of spectacle images across the Roman Empire and draws attention to the patterns of the evidence, in particular the presence of clusters. Each cluster is discussed in turn, combining the archaeological evidence with other evidence that supports the celebration of *munera*; it also considers the particular political, geographical, and historical identity of each region to provide a fuller range of factors that might have led patrons to choose spectacle imagery to decorate their houses. The analyses of the individual clusters is rewarding in that it suggests distinct reasons for choosing gladiatorial images that differ from one region to another. I argue that

[310] Woolf 1994, 127; Futrell 1997, 53-76.
[311] See the brief overview in: Mann 2009, 16-23; also Revell 2014.
[312] Revell 2009, 2014; see also Scott and Webster 2003 and the excellent historiography of provincial art in: Kampen 2015.
[313] See also Hoffman 2014; Mattingly 2014.

there is no single explanation for the appearance of spectacle images. Instead each region and each patron had his or her own reasons for commissioning a spectacle image. Thus, this chapter supports the idea that the empire was composed of a diverse set of identities but that these diverse identities were brought together in part by a common visual vocabulary and a common enjoyment of the *munera*.

1. Distribution

Although it might be assumed that images of spectacle appeared throughout the entire Roman Empire, even a quick look at the evidence will correct this assumption. The distribution of spectacle images is in fact uneven but patterns are clearly discernible. The corpus of spectacle images considered in this study includes 79 known images from 61 sites located sporadically across the entire Roman Empire. These images are by no means contemporary. The earliest images date to the 1st century BCE and the latest to the 5th or even 6th century CE. The bulk, however, is from the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE.

The spotty distribution is highlighted by the evidence from the Iberian Peninsula where a total of four images that are commonly referred to as spectacle image in scholarship, have been discovered. Of the four images, one image is not a gladiatorial fight. It actually depicts Aeneas (Cat.Nr.64).[314] Another one was part of the decoration of the amphitheater of Mérida (Cat.Nr.63), a third mosaic is not preserved and its findspot is unknown (Cat.Nr.66)[315] and only the fourth one appears to have been discovered in a domestic context (Cat.Nr.65).[316] Furthermore, these images range in date from the 1st to 4th century CE. The situation appears to have been similar in Britannia where six scenes from *munera* – both wall paintings and mosaics – have been discovered so far. Their archaeological contexts date to the late 1st through the 4th century CE. In contrast to other regions, the findspots are very well documented and the images largely dated by external evidence rather than style. However, their wide chronological spread and their diversity as a

[314] Villa of Estada: Blázquez Martínez 2002, 74; contra: Gómez Pallarès 2001: an inscription along the edge of the very poorly executed mosaic identifies the topic of the image as the Aeneid.
[315] Rielves: Blázquez 1982, 61-75.
[316] Villa de El Reguer: Blázquez 1989, 21; López Monteagudo 1991, 255-9.

set of images do not permit any generalizations concerning preferred scenes or the local appreciation of gladiatorial shows.[317]

Other provinces, such as Dalmatia, Achaia and Asia, have revealed very few depictions of *munera* but this paucity might reflect the state of research in these areas rather than local preferences. Reports on archaeological excavations in Dalmatia are quite difficult to locate, and the region has suffered greatly as a result of the recent wars. It is likely, however, that further archaeological excavations in this area of the former Yugoslavia will provide exciting new discoveries, including new evidence on gladiatorial combat and spectacle.[318] Though few images have been discovered in the Roman provinces of Achaia and Asia, this circumstance might be the product of a scholarly preference for studying earlier time periods and public monuments and urban contexts rather than townhouses and villas of the Roman period.[319] This situation is currently being remedied in Turkey, e.g. with the publication of the Terrace Houses in Ephesos and on villa culture in Asia Minor more generally.[320] The foundational work of Robert has been instrumental in revealing the great popularity of gladiatorial games in both Turkey and the Greek islands and mainland.[321]

Both Britannia and the Iberian Peninsula contrast sharply with Gallia Belgica and Africa Proconsularis where a comparatively large number of images has been discovered. Surprisingly, however, the location that preserves the largest number of *munus*-themed images is the city of Cos. Six mosaics depicting *venatio* or gladiatorial combat scenes have so far been discovered there. The significance of the large number of mosaics discovered in Cos might be dismissed as merely a reflection of the very good state of publication of mosaics from Cos.[322] But when compared to other cities with similarly extensive publications, such as Ephesos, it becomes apparent that the number of images related to the *munus* from Cos truly stands out.

[317] See also Wilmott 2008.
[318] See also Bouley 1990, 1994; esp.Bouley 2001.
[319] Dunbabin 1999, 209; Uytterhoeven 2007, 67-9.
[320] Good overviews: Krinzinger 2002; Ladstätter et al. 2012; Lavan, Özgenel, and Sarantis 2007
[321] Esp. Robert 1940.
[322] See De Matteis 2004.

This brief sketch of the distribution patterns of gladiatorial images in the Roman Empire yields two basic observations. 1. The selection of gladiatorial images is a highly regional phenomenon. Displaying *venationes* or gladiators in combat in mosaics or wall paintings in domestic contexts was popular in some areas and uncommon in others. 2. Generally speaking, spectacle is not a prevalent theme for the decoration of houses and other subjects, especially myths, were far more typical.[323] These two observations lead to the conclusion that patrons of spectacle images likely had a reason for their unusual choice of image. Furthermore, based on the relative rarity of this type of image it is also likely that not all patrons would have had the same motivation in making their choice. Rather a variety of factors would have led to their decision.

2. Cos: Regional Trends and Workshop Practices

Cos stands out from the rest of the Roman Empire for the exceptional number of scenes relating to the *munus* that were found there.[324] Of the six images featuring the *munus*, three include gladiators (Cat.Nr.19, Cat.Nr.20, Cat.Nr.24) while three include attacking leopards as part of *venatio* scenes (Cat.Nr.21, Cat.Nr.22, Cat.Nr.23).

Cat.Nr.19 and Cat.Nr.20 are particularly interesting because the compositions are very similar. Cat.Nr.19 was discovered around 1900, but its findspot is no longer known. The mosaic is dominated by the central panel depicting Orpheus surrounded by animals with two panels on either side of fighting gladiators turned at a 90° degree angle to the central panel. The gladiatorial images include Greek inscriptions that name all participants. The panel on the right is partially destroyed, and of the two gladiator pairings only one is clearly visible – a heavily armed *secutor* (PERSEUS) rushing towards a *retiarius* (-EUS) and a referee watching the two holding a stick. The panel on the left is better preserved and features another pairing of a *retiarius* (TUDEUS) and *secutor* (LEUKASPIS) along with two *provocatores* (PAKTOLOS and NUMPHEROS) about to fight and accompanied by a referee.

[323] See for example the mythical images compiled in Muth 1998. For North Africa the author assembled 48 fairly complete architectural contexts featuring mythical images. Spectacle imagery was discovered in six comparably complete architectural contexts (i.e. with documented basic ground plan).
[324] Dunbabin 1999; De Matteis 2004, 201-2.

The images described above show the initial encounter of the gladiators, but no bloodshed is depicted. However, the victorious gladiator is indicated by the inscription NEI(KE). Cat.Nr.20 is a single panel set in the entrance to a larger room in the so-called Casa del Sileno, excavated in 1938. The panel again features two gladiatorial pairs separated by a referee, each gladiator identified by name. On the left side are two *provocatores* (name not preserved vs. AIGIALOS) and on the right is a *retiarius* (ZEPHUROS) warding off the attack of a *secutor* (HULAS). The panel in the Casa del Sileno differs from Cat.Nr.19 in two respects: the figures of Cat.Nr.19 are set on a single ground line while the figures of Cat.Nr.20 are set at different levels. Also, the victors are not marked in Cat.Nr.20, the panel from the Casa del Sileno. One unusual detail does suggest that the same artisan or workshop worked on both mosaics: multiple long strings hang down behind and between the legs of several gladiators. These are the strings holding the clothing, especially the loin cloths, in place.

The so-called mosaic of the "giudizio di Paride" (Cat.Nr.24) differs slightly from Cat.Nr.19 and Cat.Nr.20. It was discovered during excavations in 1935-1940 in a large room that opens onto a courtyard. The layout of the building, where the mosaic was discovered, is difficult to assess, but it appears to have been a private context.[325] The extensive mosaic is composed of three large images with mythical subjects set in a row in the center. The three images are surrounded on all sides by a frieze illustrating a *venatio*: a variety of animals are being hunted by men. The animals include wild boars, bulls, deer, bears, etc. and in some cases the animals are victorious. The hunters vary in dress, and one in particular resembles a gladiator rather than a *venator*. He is not wearing a helmet but holding a large shield and short dagger, which seem quite useless in light of the charging bull. An inscription names the figure as ADIAMAKTOS. The figure is constructed of fewer and larger stones than the figures of Cat.Nr.19 and Cat.Nr.20, allowing for less detailing of the clothing and armor. However, the armor and stance are very similar to those of the *secutores* and *provocatores* of Cat.Nr.19 and Cat.Nr.20. It is not possible to tell whether there are also strings hanging from the loin cloth of the fighter in Cat.Nr.24.

[325] A bath is located to the west and this space could have possibly been attached to the bath.

Another image bears a striking resemblance to the mosaics from Cos: the mosaic from Orthosia in Turkey (Cat.Nr.27).[326] The mosaic was discovered during rescue excavations in 1994-1995, but only the area surrounding the mosaic was opened up, thus the exact architectural context remains unclear. The mosaic is large, and its composition is similar to that of the "giudizio di Paride" mosaic from Cos: four large panels with mythical subjects are set in a row in the center and are surrounded on all sides by a long frieze with a variety of figure combinations, including at least two pairs of gladiators set between two of the central panels. As in the panels Cat.Nr.19 and Cat.Nr.20, two gladiatorial pairs are set in a row and are separated by a referee. Only the pair to the left of the referee has been published with photographs. The scene features a fight between a *secutor* on the left and a *retiarius* on the right. The *retiarius* has lost his weapons and has almost fallen to the ground but is holding himself up with his weight on his left hand while the *secutor* is rushing towards him. The gladiators are not identified, but, surprisingly, an inscription is placed above the referee who is named as THOUREINOS LANARIS, Thoureinos the wool maker, a name that appears twice on the mosaic. The advancing *secutor* and the patterning of the arm guard of the *retiarius* are reminiscent of the mosaics from Cos. One detail that might even indicate a closer connection between the mosaics from Cos and Orthosia is the representation of the wounds of the *retiarius*: he is bleeding from a wound to his chest, and blood appears to be flowing from his buttocks, an uncommon location for a wound. Instead, the radiating lines are similar to the strings attached to the loin cloths of the gladiators in Cos and might simply be a misinterpretation of this detail.

Whether the group of images discussed above is the product of the same workshop cannot be definitively determined. Research has revealed that mosaics produced by the same workshop can differ greatly from one another, but the small and repetitive details, such as hair and ears, are often created in the same manner.[327] The type of similarities between the Coan mosaics correlates well with those that scholars use to identify

[326] Yener and Ölmez 1996 (1997); Scheibelreiter 2011, 327-30, Cat.Nr. 100; fig. 441-57.
[327] Clarke 1994; Scheibelreiter 2011, 74-7; Poulsen 2012.

workshops. Furthermore, the location of the images within the confines of a single province, Asia, suggests that a connection between these images or the workshops that produced the images probably did exist, in particular between Cat.Nr.19 and Cat.Nr.20. The type of similarities, namely the stance of the *secutor* and the strings attached to the loin cloth, suggest that the resemblances are related to workshop practices and are the product of either the same workshop or the use of similar patterns by different workshops. Such compositions would not, therefore, have been entirely dictated by the patron. The composition of the mosaic from Orthosia is strongly reminiscent of the "giudizio di Paride" mosaic from Cos, and the cooperation of artisans from Cos in the production of the mosaic in Orthosia would not be surprising. These deductions are further supported by current research on Coan mosaic workshops by L. De Matteis who argues that at least one prolific workshop was active in Cos in the 2nd and 3rd centuries with itinerant artisans who possibly updated and changed the known repertoire of images continually.[328] D. Parrish posits that Coan workshops were active in the region surrounding Cos and along the coast of Asia Minor in late Antiquity, especially in the 5th and 6th centuries.[329]

Another group of images from Cos shows the encounter of a *venator* with a leopard (e.g. Cat.Nr.22 and Cat.Nr.23; variation Cat.Nr.21).[330] Here the *venator* is standing with a spear in hand ready to mortally wound the leopard which is already attacking and in mid-jump. The movement of the two figures creates a sense of excitement because the outcome is not yet decided. In contrast to the gladiatorial images, the depiction of this encounter is far more widespread. It appears alone as well as in the context of larger scenes, such as the one in the house of Dionysos on Paphos (Cat.Nr.35). Representations of the scene of a *venator* with a leopard differ greatly from place to place in style, suggesting that they were not the product of a single workshop but were a widely known image type. Its simple but effective allusion to a *venatio* and emphasis on the most distinctive aspects of a *venatio* may account for its appeal. These were the presence of an expensive, fierce, and rare

[328] De Matteis 2004, 213-5.
[329] Parrish 2001, 331.
[330] See also chapter 3.

animal and the courage and ability of the *venator* to face the leopard. Taken alone, this image might have been a short-hand reference to a *munus*, alluding to its cultural significance.

The similarities of these images from Cos might be the result of a single workshop. But they can also have been the product of a general trend or a taste for an image type. The popularity of an image could have been generated by a single remarkable image that was then imitated. The Dioskurides mosaics and their many replicas especially in Campania is one well-documented instance.[331] This type of replication might explain the similarities between the mosaic of the giudizo di Paride in Cos and the mosaic from Orthosia. Given the fact that there is very little additional evidence from Cos for the presence of gladiators and on the celebration of *munera* [332] it seems likely that the remarkable number of spectacle images from Cos was the result of the popularity of this image type and the presence there of a prolific workshop.

3. Greek East: Past Meets Present

Although *munera* took place in the entire Roman Empire, their popularity and the method of introduction into different provinces has been widely debated. The acceptance of the *munus* has been of particular interest to scholars of the Greek East, who find it puzzling that such an overtly Roman practice would have gained popularity in the regions of Greece and Asia Minor. Due to a lack of amphitheaters in these two former Greek regions, scholars initially believed that *munera* did not take place there. But a wealth of inscriptions has proven otherwise.[333] The corpus of inscriptions relating to gladiators and the *munus* from the Greek East is larger than any from other areas of the Empire and provides a large amount of data on the organization of the *munera* and on the gladiators themselves. Many

[331] See for example the Dioskurides mosaics and its many occurrences especially in Pompeii: Nervegna 2010.
[332] There is no reference to the celebration of *munera* on the island of Cos nor has a fitting venue been identified, however, five gladiatorial inscriptions are known: see Robert 1940, 189-91.
[333] First collated by Robert 1940 and expanded in four publications featuring a total of 341 inscriptions. The latest publication of the epigraphical material was by Mann 2011 and Carter 1999 (discusses a total of 470 inscriptions). See also Günther 1985; Rumscheid and Rumscheid 2001; Rouché 2002; Hrychuk Kontokosta 2008.

of the inscriptions are tombstones but, as in Aphrodisias, *stelae* that commemorate specific gladiators, gladiatorial *familiae*, or benefactors are less prevalent.[334] This material has been used to analyze Greek perceptions of this Roman form of entertainment and to understand the integration of Roman social practices into a Greek context. Studies have shown that the *munus* was not forcibly introduced by the Roman administration but instead resulted from the competition between cities.[335] The literary sources do not provide much information on Greek attitudes towards the *munus*. While some scholars argue that the Greek authors were critical of the *munus*, others interpret the same passages as a critique of public entertainment in general rather than a dismissal of gladiatorial combats.[336] Because the literary sources are ambiguous, the inscriptions from Asia Minor have become the focus of more recent scholarship, especially in comparison with similar inscriptions from other parts of the Roman Empire, as for example the large corpus from Nîmes or also Italy.[337]

Several consistent trends have been identified in the literary sources and the inscriptions. The appropriation of Latin terms and names is prevalent in Greek texts, signaling that very few Greek terms were created to describe the *munus* and that the Latin terms were simply transcribed into Greek. Mann and also Carter have argued that this was an obvious marker of the Roman origin of the games, as Greek authors normally attempted to keep their language pure and unadulterated. Some Greek authors even apologize for their use of Latin technical terms when writing about gladiators.[338] However, the inscriptions, and in particular the tombstones, demonstrate that the gladiators and those who set up the tombstone in their honor drew on Greek cultural references in order to validate the profession and the accomplishments of the deceased. The names of the gladiators as well as the imagery accompanying the inscription are deliberately reminiscent of mythical heroes and athleticism. This is shown particularly by the choice of name and the depiction of the victorious gladiator with a palm branch and crown. In the inscriptions the

[334] Hrychuk Kontokosta 2008.
[335] Mann 2011, 121-2; 33-34.
[336] Mann 2009, 2011, 118-25.
[337] See the work of Hope 2001b, 2001c.
[338] Carter 2009, 312-3.

profession of the gladiator is presented first, followed by the victories and final combat which are shown in as favorable a light as possible by describing the opponent as fierce or extremely strong and by likening the encounter to mythical combats or athletic competitions.[339]

Despite the well-documented situation in the Greek East, it is difficult to find direct appropriations of mythical or athletic references in the wall paintings and mosaics from the same regions. The corpus of images depicting *munera* from the Greek East is limited. However, there are some commonalities between the images: the gladiators who are identified by name appear more frequently in the mosaics of the Greek East than in the mosaics and wall paintings from other areas. In the Greek East, the names that are mentioned often reference figures of Greek myth, with a preference for either heroes or figures of great physical beauty, such as KALLIMORPHOS (from Patras, Cat.Nr.3) or ZEPHYROS (from Cos, Cat.Nr.20). These names, however, do not reveal the way gladiators were viewed by those commissioning the mosaics since the names probably are the names of actual or favored gladiators. Furthermore, based solely on the names, it is impossible to deduce whether the choice of name was actually intended to convey a joke or whether it had political or social connotations, such as the name DAREIOS (from Kourion, Cat.Nr.34).

A mosaic from Miletus (Cat.Nr.26) in which the *venatores* have wings and winged boots might illustrate an attempt to blend myth with aspects of the *munus*. Four hunters armed with spears and accompanied by a dog with a collar are hunting a leopard, a tiger, a lion, and a bear, while two of the wild cats are attacking two different deer. The image is part of a triclinium mosaic and is set in the crossbar of the T. The composition is curious because the image is designed as a continuous frieze with a dividing line in the center. An image of Orpheus surrounded by the animals fills the area between the *klinai*. The image, the choice of animals, and the composition conform to other hunting scenes, but the

[339] Carter 2009, 310-1; Mann 2011, 135-76. Mann is appreciative but also critical of Carter's work, however, he does not always present Carter's arguments correctly and at times it is even distorted (especially regarding Carter's dismissal of the term "Romanization"). It appears that Mann and Carter have very similar views, something that Mann denies in his publications.

addition of the small wings is peculiar. A mosaic from Zeugma (Cat.Nr.79) also features winged hunters comparable to those in the mosaic from Miletus. The hunting scenes from Zeugma are in the form of a frieze framing a depiction of the birth of Aphrodite. The image consists of six hunters of which five are armed with spears and fighting against a leopard, two lions, a tiger, and a bear, while one figure is shooting arrows at two fleeing deer. A boar remains unnoticed as does a bear, and a dog is hunting down a deer. Some of the hunters are armed with spiked round shield. J.P. Darmon refers to them as hunting *erotes*. The types of animals being hunted and the armor of the figures places this image in a *munus* context, but the figures' lack of clothing and their wings blur the line between an imaginary mythical context and the reality of the *munus*.[340] In contrast to the mosaic from Miletus, the figures are all naked, but the selection of animals is surprisingly similar, especially the presence of a dog and the wild cats.

Although the mosaic from Miletus and its parallel from Zeugma fuse elements from myth and *munus,* these are rare occurrences.[341] Overall, images depicting spectacle from the Greek East are rare, as are gladiatorial images with references to myth and athleticism. The spectacle imagery from the Greek East thus does not parallel the inscriptions. There are two possible explanations for this lack of spectacle images: 1. images inspired by the *munus* were not a common decorative theme, especially for images of a house, and 2. the images have simply not been discovered. The discovery of a gladiatorial mosaic in Orthosia in 1995 and the identification of a figure in the wall painting from the Terrace Houses in Ephesos might support the latter explanation. It is more likely that the patrons of mosaics and wall paintings simply preferred other kinds of images. The Terrace Houses in Ephesos provide a

[340] The mosaic was discovered in the so-called House of Poseidon. The mosaic decoration of this house is particularly rich with an extensive repertoire of mosaics referencing a variety of myths as well as personifications, such as *paideia*. Also worth mentioning is an inscription referring to the mosaicist including his origin, namely *Zosimos from Samosata made this* (Ζώσιμος σαμοσατεὺς ἐποίει). Samosata is located further upstream along the Euphrates. Another mosaic from Zeugma also features the signature of Zosimos and other mosaics have been attributed to him, see also: Darmon 2004; Donderer 2008b, 52-4, Cat.Nr. a 11.
[341] Vendries argues that another mosaic from Piazza Armerina also shows children fighting as venatores (Vendries 2007). It is unclear why Vendries identifies the figures as children. The differences between the figures of this mosaic and those in other rooms of the villa appear to be related to style rather than age. Also, the figures are catching birds, an activity not connected to the *venatio*.

good sense of the types of imagery the wealthy would have chosen.[342] The wall paintings and mosaics preserved in the residential units of the Terrace Houses feature themes taken from myth and literature, including the muses with Apollo, philosophers, renderings of the Trojan war, etc. The selection of images and the materials used to decorate the Terrace Houses demonstrate the wealth and influence of the residents as well as their learning.[343] Some of the rooms even have alcoves where book roles were likely stored.[344] Only one mosaic that shows a lion holding the head of a bull with his right paw alludes to spectacles. Similar images are known from other sites in the empire as far away as Britannia. The single image clearly alludes to the events of the arena, but it is not an overt tribute to gladiatorial combat. An additional figure appears in the wall painting of the Terrace House 2. A single figure on white background has been identified as a gladiator based on the covering on his left arm. Like the lion mosaic, this painting does not commemorate the spectacles as the gladiator is not paired with a second gladiator and no action is implied. In this case, the location of the figure and its placement alongside figures of other entertainers and servants seem to imply the types of entertainment encountered during a dinner party.[345]

While the images in the houses of wealthy Ephesians generally do not refer to the spectacle, there is a considerable amount of evidence from Ephesos that the *munus* was greatly enjoyed. One wealthy family in particular, the Vedii, are known to have owned a gladiatorial familia and regularly paid for the presentation of *munera*. That the Ephesians greatly enjoyed these *munera* is indicated by inscriptions set up by the fan club of this gladiatorial *familia* – "the friends of the Vedii who love arms".[346] In addition to sponsoring *munera*, the Vedii are also known to have paid for the construction of multiple public buildings, such as the Gymnasium of Vedius, and they were politically active in Rome and had close connections to the emperors. Evidence for the enjoyment of gladiatorial combat

[342] Zimmermann and Ladstätter 2011, 125; Ladstätter et al. 2012: with further literature.
[343] See also the career of the Gaius Furius Aptus, owner of residential unit 6 in the Terrace House 2, see Rathmayr 2009; Thür and Adenstedt 2014, 846-9.
[344] The conspicuous placement of libraries in the Terrace House 2 in Ephesos is discussed by Thür 2003; see also: Woolf 1994, 126-30.
[345] Zimmermann and Ladstätter 2011, 89-90
[346] Kalinowski 2002, 131; Carter 2004, 53.

and the *munus* survives in other forms as well, such as terracotta figurines, lamps, and graffiti.[347] Literary sources even refer to Ephesos as the location of one of the earliest *munera* in Asia in 70 BCE.[348] Furthermore, one of the few gladiatorial cemeteries known from antiquity was discovered in Ephesos.[349] Although Ephesos did not have a purpose-built venue for the *munus*, the theater and the stadium were adapted for such events.[350] Overall, the rich and varied evidence from Ephesos suggests that gladiatorial events had an established fan base in the city. Thus, one might expect that the elite of the city residing in the Terrace Houses with such an appreciation for gladiatorial events would also have commemorated this type of event to a greater extent in their private houses in the form of wall paintings and mosaics. Instead, it appears that there was little demand for such images. The evidence from the Terrace Houses indicates that the wealthy chose to reinforce their status and wealth by means of other images within the domestic context. The commemoration of the sponsorship of *munera*, in contrast, took place in public settings as the inscriptions of the Vedii attest. The association of the organization of *munera* with the office of the high priest of the imperial cult allowed the elite to publicly demonstrate their allegiance to the emperor while gaining the favor of the public.[351] It is likely that the wealthy used the *munera* as a way of reinforcing their political status within the city and among the population while also demonstrating their loyalty to the emperor. The wealthy chose to demonstrate their generosity towards the city and their allegiance to the Roman emperor in public contexts. Simultaneously, in their homes they employed references to literature, myths, and the visual language of their Greek past to justify and reinforce their elevated position. Thus, gladiatorial images did not have a proper place in the decoration of

[347] *Gladiatoren in Ephesos: Tod am Nachmittag. Eine Ausstellung im Ephesos Museum Selcuk* 2002, 75-105.
[348] Lucius Licinius Lucullus celebrated the victory over Mithridates IV by hosting a *munus* in Ephesos: Dodge 2009, 31.
[349] Kanz and Grossschmidt 2009; Lösch et al. 2014.
[350] See Scherrer 1995, 168; Kalinowski 2002; Groh, Löcker, and Lindinger 2006; Kanz and Grossschmidt 2009, 211-2
[351] See the discussion and further literature in: Mann 2011, 57-64 and Mann 2009, 279.

the houses of the wealthy and influential individuals of Ephesos. Only graffiti, terracotta figurines, and lamps attest to the wide appeal of gladiatorial events.[352]

Gladiatorial *stelae* from Aphrodisias provide a similar picture. Although a number of the *stelae* commemorating specific events and donors were found, these *stelae* appear to have been part of larger burial monuments set outside of the Roman city.[353] Thus, it is likely that in other communities of Asia Minor and the Greek East, as in Ephesos and Aphrodisias, images of spectacle and gladiatorial combat were mainly reserved for public contexts as a form of image that generated public appreciation and demonstrated ones generosity. In contrast, other values were deemed appropriate for the houses of the wealth, the value of education and of social status.[354] However, there were exceptions to this practice, such as we see in the city of Cos.

4. Gallia: Of Soldiers and Manhood

While gladiators in the East attempted to gain approval by assuming mythical names or appropriating the visual language of heroic battles, inscriptions suggest that the gladiators in the west drew upon military associations. As in the study of the Greek East, tombstones have played a vital role in gaining a better understanding of the position of gladiators in the West.[355] The corpus of gladiator tombstones discovered in Nîmes has been particularly valuable for identifying epigraphic formulae typical of gladiators, and because of the large number of tombstones found there, Nîmes has been a prime source for the epigraphic study of gladiators in the West.

Research on the status of gladiators is largely based on the wording and sequence of information on the tombstones. It is generally assumed by scholars that the information

[352] Mann 2011, 85-6: states that the mosaics in the eastern Mediterranean were commonly placed in entrance spaces and dining rooms of houses and refers to the mosaics in Patras, Cos, and Kourion. The evidence does not support this statement. Patras (Cat.Nr. 3): context unclear as only a small section of the house was excavated. Cos: Cat.Nr. 19: context not documented; Cat.Nr. 20: house plan unclear; Cat.Nr. 21: courtyard; Cat.Nr. 22: context unclear; Cat.Nr. 23: context not documented; Cat.Nr. 24: house plan unclear (domestic or public context?). Kourion (Cat.Nr. 34): courtyard.
[353] Hrychuk Kontokosta 2008.
[354] See also Newby 2002, 2003, 2005.
[355] Bouley 1990, 1994, 2001; Hope 2001a, 2001b, 2001c.

mentioned first is the information that was most important and vital to the self-definition of the deceased, at least from the point of view of those setting up the tombstone. Hope has demonstrated that the inscriptions first listed the fighting style (i.e. *thraex*, *retiarius*, etc.), then the name, possibly origin, age at death, and number of appearances of the deceased gladiator followed by the identification of the person or persons in charge of setting up the tombstone.[356] Thus, the profession of the deceased was listed in a prominent position, and the viewer was informed of the number of appearances. The tombstones from Nîmes are all made in a similar fashion, and their style is fairly crude. In contrast to the tombstones from the East, they are often lacking in imagery. The original location of these tombstones is not known, but the similarity of style and inscription suggests a common burial location and a group identity.

An assessment of gladiatorial tombstones from Italy demonstrates that the gladiatorial tombstones from Nîmes are not an exception.[357] The information provided in the Italian gladiatorial epitaphs is similar to that from Nîmes. Again the name, fighting style, age, and commemorators are mentioned.[358] These inscriptions show that the identity of gladiators in the west was closely connected to their profession and success in their career. The original location of many of these tombstones is no longer known and there is some indication that the gladiators were buried in groups and isolated from the common burial grounds. This separation might have been necessary due to the *infamia* of the gladiators. At the same time, as Hope has shown, it would have heightened the visibility of the tombstones and created the impression of a group identity among gladiators.[359]

Another group of tombstones is similar to those of gladiators, namely those of soldiers. As on the tombstones of gladiators, the texts commemorating soldiers again

[356] Hope 2001c, 186-8.
[357] Inscriptions related to the amphitheater and gladiators have been collated in the series *Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell'occidente romano (EAOR)*.
[358] Hope 2001b, 101-3.
[359] Hope 2001b, 100.

primarily mention their rank, origin, years of service, and age at death.[360] Here, the emphasis appears to have been placed on their rank and therefore on their fighting skills. While the similarities between the tombstones of gladiators and soldiers might be surprising at first sight, their skill set and the demands of their profession are similar. The most prominent shared aspect of their professions is the requirement to face danger with courage and as a result soldiers and gladiators were excellent examples of the Roman ideal of *virtus*.[361] Also, soldiers and gladiators were required to regularly travel great distances making it difficult to establish and sustain relationships and families. As a result, the identity of soldiers and gladiators was based on their profession and their commitment to their comrades. The information provided on the tombstones of gladiators and soldiers was vital to their profession and their identity. The similarities might be coincidental, especially considering that Nîmes and other western cities were located in areas that might be described as demilitarized zones, since the closest military base or soldiers were quite far away.

However, a connection between the professions of soldiers and gladiators seems to have existed and has been noted in other areas as well. Bouley's study of gladiatorial combat along the Northeastern Roman frontier and in the Balkan has shown that the spread of the *munera* is closely linked to the presence of military. A prominent example is the amphitheater in Carnuntum constructed by the military stationed there along the Danube. Surprisingly, a second amphitheater was constructed within close proximity in the early 2nd century and is thought to have been intended for the civilian settlement. This second amphitheater did not replace the first amphitheater and both are argued to have been in use simultaneously.[362] While a wealth of factors likely played a role in the adoption of gladiatorial games and its spread through the army, the evidence from Carnuntum and other sites along the Limes demonstrates that the connection between gladiators and soldiers is not solely based on the epigraphic evidence from Nîmes and Italy and that these

[360] Hope 2001c, 188.
[361] Coulston 1998; Hope 2001b, 110.
[362] See Futrell 1997, 62-6; Le Roux 1990; Bouley 2001, 307-9; see also: Sommer 2009.

two professions appear to have appealed to each other. Furthermore, gladiators are known to have travelled extensively and despite the distance between Nîmes and the closest military sites, it is possible that many of these gladiators did also perform in areas with a larger military population.

Despite evidence documenting the connection between gladiators and soldiers, references to this relationship are difficult to detect in mosaics and wall painting. A single image originating from Aix-en-Provence (Cat.Nr.51)[363] is reminiscent of soldier imagery and might allude to the relationship between these two professions. It shows a gladiator, a *retiarius*, simply standing and holding his trident in his hand. The figure with brown skin is accompanied by an inscription providing the name of the gladiator: Beryllus.[364] The image is unusual in two respects: it references the skin color of the gladiator and instead of illustrating the gladiator in action, as is common, the gladiator is standing facing the viewer. The mosaic is not fully preserved and was discovered during rescue excavations. The exact nature of the context was not determined due to the small size of the excavation.

The composition of the image is very simple and the stance and general bearing of the gladiator is comparable to military tombstones, especially from the German limes.[365] Here, the soldiers are frequently shown standing in their full military garb and presenting their weapons and insignia. The soldier's name is also added to the tombstone with an inscription varying in length. In particular the slightly bent left leg of Beryllus in the mosaic is frequently found on tombstones. It is necessary to keep in mind that the mosaic is not complete and the relationship of the figure to the rest of the scene is not known. However, the inactive stance is not typical of gladiatorial images. Surprisingly, one of the inscriptions from Nîmes refers to a gladiator Beryllus, a former slave, who appeared in 20 fights and died at the age of 25.[366] The name is seldom and the proximity of Aix-en-Provence and

[363] Lavagne 1994, 2000, 218-20, Cat.Nr. 748.
[364] Beryllus is a shiny mineral gem and might refer to the skin color of the figure, see also Hope 2001c, 186.
[365] Boppert 1992, esp. 48-52, pl. 1-11.
[366] Hope 2001c, 186.

Nîmes does provide the possibility that the same gladiator is referenced in both media, however, his fighting style does not match.

It is generally accepted that tombstones of gladiators in the west are similar to those of soldiers. Despite further evidence for the connection between soldiers and gladiators, this relationship is not portrayed in the wall painting and mosaics in houses. Patrons likely did not select images of spectacle as a way of reminding themselves of the military but instead, as will be demonstrated next, patrons wished to celebrate values that were of importance to them, such as courage and fearlessness of death, a value held high in Roman military life.

5. Trier and Surroundings: Ostensibly Roman

In contrast to the areas discussed previously, Gallia Belgica, and the two Germaniae boast a wide selection of spectacle images. Several are known from the administrative and military centers in the area, such as Metz, Trier, Mainz, and Cologne. However, the most impressive examples of spectacle images were discovered in villas surrounding or along roads and rivers connecting these towns.

The provinces of Gallia Belgica and the Germaniae are located along the Limes in close proximity to one of the most heavily fortified borders of the Roman Empire. Furthermore, these provinces had excellent land for agriculture and were rich in commodities needed by the soldiers. In order to better administer the provinces, urban centers were established soon after the conquest of the regions in the late 1st century BCE, and they soon developed into larger economic centers. The development of urban centers, the presence of the military, and a new economic prosperity had far-reaching consequences for the settlements and population. The impact of trade with merchants from the entire Roman Empire, the reorganization of local communities to conform to Roman administrative requirements, as well as the presence of the Roman army meant that many aspects of Roman thought and life style were incorporated into the daily life of the population. This is evidenced particularly well in the development and growth of many Roman-style country estates, so-called *villae rusticae*, of varying size. Although the form of

many of these villas is quite different from that of typical Italian or also Campanian villa, based on their appearance N. Roymans and T. Derks have described them as follows: *"*(multi-roomed houses with tiled roofs, stone foundations, plastered walls, hypocausts, bathing facilities, etc .) they count as the most 'Roman' component of the then rural landscapes.*"*[367] The villas are usually composed of two parts, a *pars urbana* or residential space, and the *pars rustica*, the actual farm. These villas were self-sufficient agricultural settlements that housed livestock, cultivated grain nearby, and produced material goods. The products of these villas were needed to supply both the nearby cities and military bases, and some of them, such as wine and wool, were exported. There is also evidence that wines were imported from various parts of the Mediterranean further showing that the local communities had become affluent by the 2nd century CE and enjoyed the lifestyle afforded by membership in the Roman Empire.

Studies of large villa estates in Gallia Belgica and the two Germaniae have noted that the size of the *pars urbana* is often surprisingly large and does not bear any resemblance to the simple pre-Roman house forms.[368] Research has shown that these villas were owned by an elite that developed following the Roman invasion. Many of these elites had formerly held positions of authority in their local communities and, in turn, became officials in the councils of their towns and surrounding territories. These offices were tied to a strict set of stipulations requiring the free-born status of elite individuals along with ownership of property. For instance, it was necessary for individuals vying for positions in the local administration to own houses both in the town and in the country. In addition, these townhouses and villas had to exemplify the wealth and influence of their owners.[369] These regulations created a competition between the local elites rivaling for political influence and also social status which was reflected in house size and elaboration.

[367] Roymans and Derks 2011, 1; see also Woolf 1998, 148-57.
[368] Jansen 1999; Derks and Roymans 2011.
[369] See Derks 2011, esp. 126-7.

Images of gladiators were discovered in some of the largest Roman villas excavated to date along the northwestern frontier. The villa Nennig and the villa in Bad Kreuznach stand out because of their exceptional size and location along important transport routes. While the villa Nennig was located directly on the Moselle River between Metz and Trier, the villa in Bad Kreuznach was situated along the Rhine. Their location along rivers ensured that their products could be shipped easily to the commercial centers of the area and even to other parts of the Roman Empire. This easy access to transportation routes were no doubt an important reason for the wealth of the villa owners. No inscriptions have been discovered in either villa that might inform us about the former patron or patrons, but inscriptions from other villas indicate the types of patrons that would have owned such houses. Derks has argued that bronze tablets discovered in a villa in Ravenbos document the friendship between a certain M. Vitalinius, *decurio* and *quaestor* in Colonia Ulpia Traiana (Xanten), and a certain Iulius.[370] The lack of a second name signals that Iulius was a peregrine and thus of lower rank than M. Viatalinius. Although the tablets state "best friend", the relationship between these two men was more likely one of patron and client. The surprising aspect of this set of tablets is the great distance of 100 km between the villa, where the tablets were discovered, and the Colonia Ulpia Traiana, where M. Vitalinius held a variety of administrative posts. Multiple explanations for the distance between the country residence and town residence of M. Vialinius have been offered, but the recent argument by Derks is the most convincing. He suggests that these tablets document a system of patronage between a figure who was politically active in the closest urban center and the population living in the vicinity of his country residence. The patron would have held audience and received his clients when he visited his country residence, which was likely only one of multiple estates he owned.

Another villa located near Ravenbos is the villa by Maasbracht (Cat.Nr.56).[371] While the villa by Maasbracht was excavated in the course of the 1980s, a cache of wall painting

[370] Derks 2011.
[371] Swinkels 1987; van Dierendonck, Swinkels, and Willems 1988.

fragments was discovered under the floor level of the largest room. The wall painting appears to have been intentionally removed during a remodeling and was thus very well preserved. The painting has not been extensively published, but it is known that it included three different groups of figural scenes: one group featured gladiators and *venatores*, another group of images comprised illustrations of various myths, and the third group depicts two standing figures, one with a writing tablet and stilus and the other with a purse. An inscription that was also identified might be of considerable interest but it has never been published despite its purported good state of preservation.[372] The paintings are of exceptional quality, and it is thought that the villa was the main residence of a wealthy patron. Based on the quality and presumed wealth of the patron, Thomas has suggested that the gladiatorial images might refer to the patron's benefaction of games at Colonia Ulpia Traiana, the nearest town with an amphitheater.[373] Considering the distance of about 90 km between Maasbracht and Colonia Ulpia Traiana, it seems unlikely that many of the people visiting the house would have actually witnessed the games. Taken on their own, these gladiatorial images might commemorate a past benefaction of the patron. However, the wall paintings of the room need to be viewed in their entirety in order to understand the purpose of the images. Rather than assume a single purpose of documenting actual events, it is more helpful to consider the effect these images would have had on clients who were probably engaged in cultivating the patron's farm on the edge of the Roman Empire. Viewed in their entirety the three groups of images, namely myth, gladiators, and figures with a purse and a *stilus* might refer to different aspects of elite Roman life. The images of myth might symbolize learning. The images of gladiatorial events could demonstrate an appreciation of Roman virtues. Finally, the figures with purse and *stilus* might illustrate ones' ability to read, write, and manage an estate. The decoration of the room incorporates multiple themes important to Roman elite thinking. In this way the patron set himself apart from the local, largely agrarian community as well as the non-Roman citizens living on the other side of the Limes. Displaying visual references to the achievements of Roman

[372] van Dierendonck, Swinkels, and Willems 1988, 30.
[373] Thomas 2008, 6-7.

civilization naturally reflected positively on the patron and reaffirmed his position as a knowledgeable Roman landowner and a reliable patron to his clients.[374]

The images from the villa in Maasbracht touch on an element that likely influenced the patrons in their choice of images, especially in consideration of the location of these villas, and might explain the larger number of gladiatorial images in this area. Many of the villas, such as the villa of Bad Kreuznach, the villa of Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler (Cat.Nr.53), and the villa in Maasbracht (Cat.Nr.56) were located right along the border of the Roman Empire, separated from non-Roman territories by only a river. Although there is little evidence of hostilities along the border, living on the perimeter of the Roman Empire likely encouraged these landowners to appear civilized and to embrace Roman values to a greater extent than might have been the case in other places closer to Rome. In particular, politically active landowners would have needed to demonstrate their allegiance to the Roman Empire in order to ensure their political careers and place on the local Roman councils. While large, ornate villas would have demonstrated the landowner's commercial success and standing within the community, they would also have had to express the Roman value system. Images borrowed from the amphitheater would have been a particularly effective choice, as the gladiatorial games were considered to be quintessentially Roman and a mark of civilization. Central to arguments on the importance of *munera* is that they symbolized the Roman idea of reinstating order and therefore bringing culture to the uncivilized areas of the world.[375] Maintaining order included the killing of those who did not live according to Roman rules, restoring order to nature by killing wild animals, and the triumph of those who had superior skills in swordsmanship and fearlessly faced danger. This choice of imagery for an affluent villa along the Roman border would have sent a powerful message of patriotism to both Roman and non-Roman viewers.

[374] This set of images is very poorly published but the quality and descriptions are promising. For additional interpretations see Wiedemann 1992, 24; Derks 2011, 127.
[375] Wiedemann 1992, 103.

In addition to its location along the Roman border, the villa in Bad Kreuznach and also those at Maasbracht, Nennig, among others were located near military bases. The villa in Bad Kreuznach was very close to the military base in Mainz, Mogontiacum, where up to four legions and accompanying auxiliary troops were stationed. The location of Bad Kreuznach suggests that the villa was possibly involved with the army in the lucrative trade in agricultural products, an important source of wealth for the owner of the villa. In addition to the presence of active soldiers, many veterans received parcels of land near to their past.[376] As a result, most civilians would have been familiar with the military to some degree. Many young soldiers were recruited from the local communities in the northwestern provinces.[377] Although the young recruits were not necessarily posted close to home, their profession would have further familiarized their families with the military. The military character of the region must be kept in mind when considering the gladiatorial profession, as gladiators and soldiers are often considered in related terms, as discussed above. Gladiators not only demonstrated the same values as soldiers but often even used the same types of weapons. Especially along the northwestern frontier where there was a strong military presence, gladiator images might have appealed to individuals influenced by strong military values and appreciative of single combat skills.[378]

An example of images inspired by an appreciation of military values and armed combat in general might be sought in the graphic mosaic of gladiators in combat from the villa in Kaiseraugst (Cat.Nr.39). Five vignettes showing gladiators in single combat are preserved. Of the five scenes, four appear to display the final moments of the fight with the loser either turning away or receiving the final blow. This is an uncharacteristically high number of fatal encounters for a mosaic. The archaeological context was well documented and contrary to the usual interpretation, there is little evidence to identify the room where the mosaic was discovered as a triclinium. Instead, it might be more aptly referred to as a

[376] For a detailed analysis of the impact of veterans and the military on the local communities, see Stoll 2006; Jansen 1999, 825.
[377] Stoll 2006, 228-30.
[378] See also Coulston 1998.

cubiculum.[379] In addition to the gladiator mosaic, a statue of Mars and a dagger were discovered in the house, giving rise to the notion that the house was a meeting place of gladiators.[380] However, these items are not necessarily connected to a gladiatorial milieu. A statue of Mars might just as well refer to the military. Although Kaiseraugst first developed as a military base to defend the Rhine Limes, by the time the mosaic was installed in the 2nd century, the Limes had been moved further north and soldiers were no longer stationed in the town. But the location of Kaiseraugst along the Rhine would have resulted in army units regularly traveling through there as they made their way north along the Rhine. The small finds in the villa in Kaiseraugst do not prove that the patron had ties to the military, but the graphic depiction of the final moments in gladiatorial fights, as well as the presence of the statue of Mars, do suggest that the former owner was greatly attracted to combat and events related to the military.

Finally, a general lack of mythological images has long been attested in the northwestern provinces, a surprising circumstance since references to myth are some of the most common and consistent themes in the decoration of private spaces across the Roman Empire. Instead, many residences and burial monuments in the northwest are decorated with unparalleled scenes of daily life, such as a shipping scene in the large dining room of the villa in Bad Kreuznach. This has led scholars to believe that many house owners in the northwestern provinces were not particularly familiar with Greco-Roman myth and as a result chose other subjects to decorate their houses.[381] Patrons who selected spectacle images likely witnessed, or possibly even financed, *munera* and selected such images as a reminder of the ephemeral and exciting events. The images might not exactly conform to our modern category "daily life", but they are depictions inspired by life.

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[379] The ornate patterning does not fill the entire space of the room and a narrow panel at the end of the room is marked out with a brick pattern. This type of floor patterning is not common for *triclinia* and usually the identifying mark of a *cubiculum*. Furthermore, the room would have been too small and the gladiator vignettes covered by the *kline* should this room have been used as a *triclinium*. Based on the house plan, it is more likely that room F would have functioned as the *triclinium* as it is fairly large and had a hypocaust heating system but it is usually identified as a private bath.

[380] Berger and Hufschmid 2012, 194-5

[381] Boppert 2000, 104; see also Dunbabin 1999, 78-85.

The images from Trier and its territory demonstrate that patrons likely had many different motivations for selecting their interior decor. Houses had to reflect the social standing of their patrons but many patrons wished to convey additional meaning, such as their superior position in relation to their clients.[382] The location of the residence, personal preferences (such as a predilection for scenes of daily life) and other elements of the patron's identity played a role in the creation of the images. Naturally, the selection of images would also have been influenced by the repertoire of the local workshops.

6. North Africa: Decadence and Luxury

North Africa is often held to be the area with the greatest number of mosaics and wall paintings illustrating spectacles.[383] From Africa Proconsularis 15 images are known.[384] However, the images mainly show a variety of animal hunt scenes that at times are ambiguous in their meaning and it is unclear whether they reference a *munus*. Scenes including gladiatorial imagery are not common. The known gladiatorial images from North Africa all come from a single city and its surrounding territory, namely Leptis Magna. This density of gladiatorial imagery in a single region was already seen in Cos. However, in contrast to Cos, there are very few similarities among the individual images in Leptis Magna with the exception of their similar contexts. The concentration of these images around the city of Leptis Magna is not surprising, as the city was particularly prosperous from its trade with Rome in olive oil and other goods.[385] The city was also located along numerous shipping routes, resulting in a diverse and cosmopolitan population. Some of its citizens are known to have become part of the Roman elite and entered the senatorial and equestrian classes. One, Septimius Severus, became emperor.

Following chance discoveries of large villas along the coast surrounding Leptis Magna and due to an increase in construction of modern hotels and subsequent destruction

[382] See also Ellis 1991.
[383] E.g. Mattingly and Hitchner 1995, 206.
[384] This statistic must be slightly corrected, as the province Africa Proconsularis was fairly large in comparison to other areas.
[385] Mattingly 1988, 27; Munzi, Felici, and Cifani 2004, 26.

of archaeological sites in recent years, several survey projects have been investigating the landscape surrounding Leptis Magna.[386] Based on earlier work it is known that the landscape of Roman North Africa was densely populated with large villas and attached latifundia as well as more modest dwellings of all sizes where the less wealthy lived and farmed.[387] While the small farms and houses are not well preserved, the preservation of many of the larger villas is spectacular. For example, at the villa Silin (Cat.Nr.11) rooms with both mosaic floors and wall paintings have been discovered. A particularly large number of villa estates has been discovered along the coast, attesting to the incredible wealth of the patrons in their size, setting, and decoration. Many of these villas had private harbors in order to transport the products of their estates to larger markets.[388] The height of Leptis Magna's prosperity is thought to have been reached in the late 2nd and early 3rd century CE. It was likely further stimulated by public construction financed by a native son, the emperor Septimius Severus.[389]

Three villas as well as a bath building that feature imagery connected to the *munus* have been documented in and around Leptis Magna. The imagery is fairly well known, but scholars have tended to view the sites individually rather than study them in relation to one another or as part of a single region. The large villa in Zliten (Cat.Nr.18) excavated in the early 19th century is probably the most famous of the four sites. The villa is located on the coast 30 km to the southeast of Leptis Magna. It lies parallel to the coastline with various rooms that look out onto the sea. Because documentation of the excavation is lacking, the date of the villa has been much debated. Suggested dates range from the late 1st century to the late 4th century.[390] Not only the villa but also the archaeological context of the mosaics are poorly published so that very little can be said about the function of the rooms and

[386] Munzi, Felici, and Cifani 2004; Schörle and Leitch 2012, 149; 51. These projects were likely curtailed by the events of the Arab Spring. It is unclear whether any further work is currently taking place.
[387] See also Mattingly and Hitchner 1995, 189-96; Munzi, Felici, and Cifani 2004, 21-2, fig. 9, table 2.
[388] Schörle 2011, 100-3.
[389] Mattingly and Hitchner 1995, 185.
[390] A date in the late 2nd or early 3rd century CE appears the most convincing, as argued by Parrish 1985, see also Dunbabin 1978, 265-7 for a review of the earlier dating arguments. See also Dunbabin 1999, 120: she posits that the geometric decor in the villa Silin and the villa Dar Buc Ammera are the product of the same workshop.

phases of their use. One mosaic in particular has received a great deal of scholarly attention because it provides a detailed account of the different parts of a *munus*. It includes scenes of gladiatorial fights, *venationes*, animal fights, and the mauling of prisoners. Two of the four sides are dedicated to the depiction of gladiator encounters, while the other two illustrate the events featuring animals. The *munus*-themed part of the mosaic is a narrow frieze that frames a large mosaic composed of alternating squares of *opus sectile* and mosaic panels depicting a variety of fish. The frieze style depiction is evocative of a narrative, but there are no discernible visual references to an actual event (such as landscape or architectural details) or the sponsorship of a *munus* (such as name inscriptions). The execution of the images is of high quality and the finely rendered details would have required the viewer to come close in order to see them.

Another example, the villa Silin (Cat.Nr.11), is a very large complex, that was discovered in the 1970s. It is located about 15 km to the northwest of Leptis Magna. The villa was covered with sand following its abandonment and, as a result is very well preserved, with its impressive array of mosaics and wall paintings largely intact. The mosaic floors of the villa include an unusual encounter with a bull that seems to show the killing of a prisoner by a bull, while two figures are lying on the ground. Their bodies are limp and their limbs are in unnatural positions, suggesting that they are dead. A figure in the background holds a rod and is likely prodding the bull. An inscription above the figures reads *Filoserapis comp.* Picard suggested that the inscription must be read as *composuit* and connects the verb to the amphitheater since it can refer to the person who sets two gladiators against each other. It might also allude to the fact that Caracalla was referred to as *Filoserapis*.[391] This hypothesis is not convincing because *composuit* can simply refer to the person who designed the mosaic who in this case would be Filoserapis.[392] This type of identification might be warranted based on the unusual aspects of the image, in particular the illustration of corpses. In addition to the room with the bull mosaic, another prominent

[391] Picard 1985, 239-40.
[392] Blázquez, López Monteagudo, and Neira Jiménez 1990, 509-10; Wilson 2008, 47.

room located off of a small peristyle was decorated with a mosaic depicting a circus race. The image of the circus race is particularly elaborate. In it multiple stages of a race are shown simultaneously in the architectural setting of the circus. Comparing the details of the architecture in the mosaic and the actual circus at Leptis Magna, J. Humphrey has identified the depicted circus as the Circus Maximus in Rome. He also points out the similarities between this mosaic and two other well-known circus mosaics, one in Carthage and another in Lyon.[393]

In addition to these two impressive mosaics, the villa Silin also features a large scale scene of a *venatio* painted on the walls of the small peristyle that leads to the room with the circus mosaic. The wall paintings have not been published in detail, but they appear to show men in short tunics armed with swords, spears, and shields ready to attack a wild cat and possibly an antelope. A second painting shows a single *venator* hunting what might be a wild boar.[394] The theme of sports and entertainment appears one last time in an alcove of the baths of the villa where two boxers appear in mid-fight.

The wall paintings of *venatores* in the villa Silin have been compared stylistically to the paintings found in the so-called Hunting Baths at Leptis Magna.[395] Wall painting with depictions of hunters killing leopards and lions fills two of the walls in the *frigidarium* of the Hunting Baths. The figures are life size and placed at a height of 1.6 m above the ground. The hunting frieze covers the entire north and south side of the room. In addition to style, the placement and size of the paintings are reminiscent of the paintings in the villa in Silin, especially the way the doorways and windows are integrated into the painting. The north side of the room is poorly preserved, but it illustrates a lion hunt, while the south side is fairly well preserved. Even the inscriptions that name some of the leopards and hunters are still legible.[396]

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[393] For a full discussion of the image and its meaning: Humphrey 1986, 210-6; see also Humphrey 1984, 392-4; Wilson 2008, 46.
[394] Descriptions based on images found on flickr.
[395] Dolciotti 2010, 661; Bianchi, Trenta Musso, and Baroni 2012.
[396] Ward-Perkins and Toynbee 1949, 181-2; Bianchi, Trenta Musso, and Baroni 2012.

The newest discovery of a gladiator mosaic is from an undisclosed location in the Wadi Lebda in the immediate vicinity of Leptis Magna. It was found during a field survey and subsequent excavation, but it remains unpublished except for a few newspaper articles.[397] The villa appears to have been part of a large estate where olive oil and cereals were produced. The mosaic itself, which was discovered in the private bath of a villa, shows two gladiators after the conclusion of their fight. One gladiator is shown in profile, sitting on the ground while the second gladiator lies on the ground already dead. The dead gladiator lies at an angle, his body foreshortened to create the impression of depth. This image of gladiators is accompanied by a second image of a *venatio* with multiple men hunting bears, boars, deer, and bulls among other animals. The villa also features a mosaic of charioteers crashing into one another.

The images of spectacle from the large villas around Leptis Magna have one important thing in common: the villas have multiple mosaics and wall paintings featuring different forms of public entertainment. These images are commonly interpreted as follows:

> "Such mosaics indicated the patron's familiarity with and involvement in the life of the city, where the games were held, as well as the urban monuments associated with them. Often they commemorated particular games sponsored by the patron,…"[398]

Yet, the presence of several villas with similarly themed mosaics and wall paintings make it unlikely that several families would have sponsored multiple events, including a circus race, and *munera* and that they would have then chosen to commemorate the games they sponsored in identical ways. Instead, it seems more likely that spectacle and public entertainment were simply favorite themes for the decoration of villas in this particular region. The images are exciting and recall the ephemeral events familiar to most viewers. Another prominent villa, the villa del Casale in Piazza Armerina, includes a similar selection

[397] Minerva 2005 (4), 4; Minerva 2005 (6), 33-4.
[398] Goodman 2007, 72.

of images – the catching and delivery of wild animals, and a circus race. These images and comparable ones from Piazza Armerina, suggest that depictions of ephemeral entertainments were popular among the wealthy of Leptis Magna. Whether the images had personal meaning cannot be known but the elaborate compositions and careful craftsmanship of the mosaics and wall paintings would have underscored their value and would have added to the owner's display of wealth.

Various scholars have identified workshop relationships between the wall painting in the villa in Silin and those in the Hunting Baths, and also between the geometric decor in the villa in Silin and the villa in Dar Buc Ammera in Zliten. Thus, a workshop's repertoire is likely to have influenced the patron's choice in imagery, especially considering that these images all appear to date roughly to the late 2nd and early 3rd century.

7. Conclusions

Several important conclusions can be drawn from this regional survey of Roman spectacle images. The survey demonstrates the need to study images not only in their archaeological but also their regional contexts. In this case, a simple quantification of the images and plotting of their findspots revealed clear patterns in their distribution. The pattern of distribution and information about the quantity of images provides a valuable corrective, as the number of images has often been overestimated.[399] Thus, contrary to what some scholars have suggested, the numbers show that images of spectacle were not a common decorative theme, especially taking into consideration the large size of the Roman Empire and their occurrence over the course of 500 years.[400] Depictions of *munera* in wall painting and mosaics in relation to other subjects are unusual. This fact alone suggests that the choice of subject and the design was carefully thought through by both the patron and the craftsmen.

[399] E.g. Tuck 2014, 427: *"Almost as common as combat scenes are images of single gladiators standing as though preparing for or having just completed a match."* With the exception of images accompanying gravestones, there are actually very few images with single standing gladiators and only one image in this corpus from Aix-en-Provence (Cat.Nr. 51) fits the description.

[400] E.g. Kondoleon 1991, 105: "*Mosaic compositions of events staged at amphitheaters throughout the Empire were especially popular."*

The unequal distribution of the images across the Empire is accompanied by a wide variation in the choice of image types. While Britannia and the Iberian Peninsula have yielded very few images that refer to the *munus*, archaeological research in other areas, such as Trier, Leptis Magna, and Cos, has yielded larger quantities of such images. Since *munera* and gladiatorial events were generally perceived as a quintessential Roman form of entertainment in antiquity, especially because they were closely connected to the Imperial cult, evidence of gladiators, such as inscriptions or weapons, and even images of the *munus* have been used to gauge the level of Romanization of specific areas. However, debates on Romanization have brought more awareness to regional diversity, and studies of acculturation, as described by N. Terrenato, attempt to explore "the nature of the variability that Romanization can display in terms of processes involved, Roman strategies and native responses."[401] This approach, however, has been neglected in the study of visual material, such as wall painting and mosaics. Regional variation has more typically been considered in connection with the identification of possible workshops.

As demonstrated in this chapter, local, historical, political, and economic factors played a significant role in the way in which regional populations chose to identify themselves as Romans. For the elites, such choices were crucial for their own purposes of self-promotion and for justifying their social status. Many scholars have pointed out that the identity of individuals would have varied depending on their sex, their socio-economic background, whether they were free born, among many other factors.[402] In the case of the *munera*, images largely come from elaborate domestic spaces in houses or villas, that were likely owned by wealthy local elites. Despite the similar socio-economic background of many of the patrons of spectacle images, it is misleading to speak of an "international elite".[403] Instead, as I have argued, the images studied here were intended to be viewed by a local audience and must, therefore, be understood as part of a local visual discourse that was intended to reinforce hierarchies and enhancing the patron's display of status both for

[401] Terrenato 2001, 64.
[402] See the discussion in Revell 2009, 151-4.
[403] Kondoleon 1999, 337.

local clients and for persons of equal or higher rank. Since the actual identity of the owners of these houses is mostly not known, it is difficult to gauge their rank in an empire-wide context.[404]

While most spectacle images are argued to have had a commemorative function and reflect the past sponsorship of the patron, such a single overarching explanation for the choice of imagery is not satisfactory. This is demonstrated particularly well by the distribution patterns of the findspots. Instead, based on the very different historical developments of each area, and the local audiences for these images, each patron would have had his or her reasons for choosing an image of the *munus*. These reasons could have been fairly mundane, such as the skillset of the local workshop and the extent of its artistic repertoire, but in some cases their choices can be tied to local trends. A prolific workshop was likely responsible for many of the images related to the spectacles in Cos and in Leptis Magna. Patrons in other areas, such as the region around Trier and along the Roman limes, were possibly inspired to choose images of typical Roman life in order to set themselves apart from people living on the other side of the border and thus claim Roman identity and values. Likewise, the owner's appreciation of historical or mythical accounts of single combats and military values such as courage, fearlessness, and honor, could have caused him or her to select images of the *munus* for the decoration of his or her house. Last but not least, the very fact that spectacles were greatly enjoyed, as attested by the many graffiti, suggests that these images would have extended the patron's enjoyment of the short lived special occasions and allowed them – along with their clients and peers – to relive the events at will.

Gunderson very aptly described the cultural importance of the *munus* that equally applies to the depictions of the *munus*: "Most importantly, the arena serves to reproduce

[404] The name of one owner is known. Gaius Furius Aptus was the owner of residential unit 6 in Terrace House 2, see also Rathmayr 2009; Thür and Adenstedt 2014, 846-9. This is unusual as the name and history of the former owners of very few Roman residences is known. Notable exceptions are the Roman estate of the family of the Laecanii on the island of Brioni in Istria (Schrunk and Begović 2000) and the villa of Herodes Atticus in Loukou (Pritchett 1989). Also of interest is the discovery of a circus mosaic in the villa of Herodes Atticus.

the Roman subject and thus acts as an instrument of the reproduction of Romanness as variously lived experience."[405]

[405] Gunderson 1996, 107.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study was motivated by the question of why images of blood sports were integrated into the decoration of private homes. The images have normally been explained as commemorations of *munera* paid for by the patron of the house. This type of explanation considers the images to be historic documents, and, it follows from this, that there is little need to analyze them further or to advance any other interpretations. As was shown in the introduction, this explanatory model is unsatisfactory on many levels. The images, I have tried to show, did not function as the equivalent of snapshots. The model that sees them as such does not take into consideration similarities in form across the multicultural setting of the Roman Empire. Further, it assumes that only benefactors of the *munus* would have enjoyed images of favorite forms of entertainment in their houses. My study shows that the images fulfilled a variety of functions related to the social setting, wealth, and identity of a patron, all of which were often heavily inflected by the regional context.

My approach to the material has been defined by a close analysis of the images and attention to their individual archaeological contexts. Each chapter was dedicated to a different context: i) the historical context, ii) the artistic context, iii) the archaeological context, iv) the geographical (and related social) context. Situating my work in these different contexts has allowed me to draw inferences from many different forms of evidence that lead to a more nuanced view of the corpus of images and their function. One particular benefit of the systematic, comprehensive approach I have adopted is that it allows for a comparative understanding of images and makes it possible to differentiate between commonplace and unusual elements.

Previous scholars have often stressed the element of violence and death in relation to the *munus* and to gladiatorial combat in particular. However, deadly scenes are not as common as has often been stated. Of the 79 images included in this study, only eleven

feature gladiators and hunters who appear to be either mortally wounded or already dead.[406] A far greater number of images includes animals that have been killed or are badly wounded. While animals are often depicted with blood dripping from their wounds, artists appear to have been more hesitant about showing bloodied gladiators.[407] This observation underscores one main point of my study: patrons did not choose images of spectacle in order to show bloodshed and gory slayings of gladiators. Rather many patrons like artisans wanted to show the full spectrum of possible deeds and outcomes at a *munus.* As in the case of the mosaic from Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr.57) many different moments from the *munus*, including one in which a gladiator is defeated, are represented. Dead or vanquished fighters were necessary elements in series of gladiatorial images. They valorized the superior qualities of the victor and called attention to the high stakes of the competition. In contrast to earlier scholars, I understand the images of spectacle as celebrations of victory that drew upon established conventions for representing the *munus*. These images functioned in ways that are similar to Imperial triumphal images, such as those on the column of Trajan, where the details of the battles underscore Roman military prowess in achieving victory over the Dacians.

In concluding, I want to return to three questions that I have addressed in the preceding chapters: 1) how should images of spectacle be interpreted in domestic contexts? 2) What do they tell us about the people who selected these images? 3) How do images of the *munus* differ from other images of spectacle?

1. The Interpretation of Images of Spectacle in Domestic Contexts

Images of the *munus* differ from other forms of evidence, such as tombstones or literary references, in that they provide a tantalizing glimpse of the events from the perspective of those who attended the games. This perspective, however, is deceptive. The

[406] This includes humans killed in executions (2: Cat.Nr. 07, Cat.Nr. 18), animal fights (2: Cat.Nr. 17, Cat.Nr. 24), and gladiatorial combat (7: Cat.Nr. 16, Cat.Nr. 36, Cat.Nr. 47, Cat.Nr. 74, Cat.Nr. 75, Cat.Nr. 76). One image cannot be defined exactly (Cat.Nr. 67).

[407] E.g. the Borghese mosaic (Cat.Nr. 75): both men and animals are being killed but only the wounds of the animals are bloody.

lively movements of the figures, the array of animals, and the inscribed names suggest that real events that actually happened are represented. But a closer look at the images tells a different story. These are images created out of a known repertoire of figures and animals. The images are conscious constructions of the events that were very likely dictated by a patron who wished to recall his individual experience of the games. Furthermore, the images are products of artists and craftsmen who had to translate that experience and desire of the patron into visual form. It is necessary to keep in mind that the audiences at the games experienced them very differently depending on their social standing, gender, and whether they were free-born or slave. Thus, the images can only represent experiences of those who made and commissioned them. And this is where the actual story begins: the images can tell us about the patron's experiences of the games as well as his or her sense of the value of the games.

The images extended the experience of the *munus* by emphasizing those elements that made the *munus* meaningful to the patron. The simplest explanation for the choice of imagery is that the patron enjoyed the games and wished to extend the experience of the ephemeral event. In the context of dining spaces, the extension of that event might even have led to reenactments of the event with friends and colleagues. But patrons likely had additional reasons for choosing an image of the *munus*. The element of social order embedded in the games would have been of interest to patrons who were eager to demonstrate their position of control over clients who called on them in their houses and villas. The assertion of social hierarchy is also common to the games where spectators were seated according to categories of wealth. Viewers of images also conformed to that hierarchy. The most prominent example occurs in the villa Nennig where the floor mosaic of the largest reception room is designed so that the most important scenes of the mosaic can only be seen from the seat of honor. Thus, images of spectacle could function as markers of status. More often, however, they were consciously placed in homes as a form of self-promotion intended to elevate one's social status. Such is the case with the Magerius Mosaic in Smirat. In this mosaic an inscription accompanies the images and describes the vast amount of money Magerius paid as sponsor of the depicted leopard hunt. The

inscription is unusual because it also documents the response of the audience praising Magerius for his generosity. Mosaics also functioned as indicators of wealth owing to the amount of labor that was required to produce them. The often intricate spectacle compositions would have been no exception.

In contrast to previous scholarship, my reassessment of the archaeological contexts of the images reveals that images of spectacle were not confined to triclinia but were placed in many different parts of the house. The images had different functions that matched their architectural contexts and they varied in meaning depending on the nature of the space. Connective spaces, such as corridors, are of particular interest as the figures in the mosaics could serve to direct visitors through the space. The sizes and postures of the figures and changes in the orientation of the figures could invite guests to continue walking. The presence of visual barriers signal to them that they should proceed no further into a certain space. Furthermore, connective spaces might not have required deeply meaningful images because people would likely have passed by them quickly rather than spend long periods of time contemplating them.

2. Images of the *Munus*, *Ludus*, and Athletic Competitions

The results of recent art historical studies of circus, charioteer, and athletic imagery correspond particularly well with my own assessment of the images of the *munus* in several respects. The first is the historicity of the images. In Dunbabin's discussions of victorious charioteers and also in her study of mosaics from North Africa, she posits that many of the images were composed from standardized figures that were part of known pictorial repertoire.[408] B. Bergmann, in her analysis of landscape painting as well as circus imagery, comes to the conclusion that the images do not depict real scenes. Instead, the figures are of a generic, formulaic nature which she refers to as an "established vocabulary".[409] Other scholars, such as Kondoleon, A. Bohne, and Z. Newby agree that the images themselves

[408] Dunbabin 1978, 1982, 2015.
[409] Bergmann 1991, 2008.

were based on known figure types. All these scholars allow that many of these images could refer to past events.[410]

An overarching assessment that most scholars would subscribe to is offered by Bergmann and Kondoleon in their introduction to the excellent volume on *The Art of Ancient Spectacle*:

> "The variety of spectacle references combined within a single room reveals a desire not just to prolong ephemeral events, but to synchronize the most exciting moments of those events in the confined spaces of one's daily routine. They provided a kind of "meta-spectacle" that collapsed boundaries among distinct venues and occasions."[411]

Secondly, most scholars recognize that events, such as circus races, athletic competitions, and *munera* would have been perceived on multiple levels owing to the complexity of the events and the varied audiences that attended them. These complex experiences were then translated into images of varying meaning. The images would have evoked many different associations meaningful to the patron of the house as well as other viewers. As a result, these images were imbued with messages that we will likely never fully understand.

Circus imagery has been shown to be symbolic of cosmic cycles, symbolized by the circular course of the charioteers, and by the symbols placed in the circus. Circus races are often depicted as composite images illustrating the start, exciting events during the race, and the finish in order to suggest the event in its entirety. Bergmann describes it as a way "to effectively capture the protean character of a space where ephemeral, momentary actions energized a site laden with symbols of deep time."[412]

[410] Dunbabin 2014
[411] Bergmann and Kondoleon 1999, 15.
[412] Bergmann 2008, 387.

Athletic images have been most frequently discovered in public baths, a circumstance which has led scholars to argue that the depicted figures simply illustrate ideal athletes and thus contribute to the atmosphere of sport and recreation in the baths. Newby has argued that these figures were models to which Romans working out in the baths aspired.[413]

Overall, though, victory is a theme that frequently recurs in discussions of images of spectacle. The element of victory emphasizes the competitive nature of the events and demonstrates that, to a large extent, the competition between the gladiators or animals and hunters represented the exciting element of the events. Within the context of the private house, images of victory might be understood as alluding to the patron, as posited by Dunbabin who suggests that images of victorious charioteers evoked "concepts of victory and success, to bring good fortune to the house where they are laid and to those who enter it."[414]

While images of the *munus* do not illustrate cosmic cycles or athletic events, they do need to be considered in similar terms to those of other types of spectacle. All of these images have in common the subject of entertainment, and, they all were likely selected because they provoked associations that were meaningful to the patron. The compositions all encapsulate the most important moments of the events and present them in a manner that aggrandized the patron.

3. Future Directions

One element of this study appears particularly appropriate for future study, namely regionalized analyses of imagery. With the exception of scholarship that focuses on Pompeii, scholars tend to range widely across the Empire in their search for parallels for certain images. However, my study clearly demonstrates the benefit of a greater awareness of regional variation.[415] Previous authors, such as Dunbabin, have provided

[413] Newby 2002; see the critique in Bohne 2011, 236-7.
[414] Dunbabin 1982, 86.
[415] See the recent museum exhibit at the McMullen Museum in Boston: Brody and Hoffman 2014.

characterizations of the artistic production of each Roman province but Roman provinces were large and diverse. Instead, my study focuses on smaller areas, in particular cities and their surrounding territory. For example, in Leptis Magna prolific and highly skilled workshops catered to the wishes of the exceptionally wealthy patrons. Their images are innovative in comparison to those common in other parts of the empire. The mosaic from Zliten, for example, has frequently been considered unusual, causing scholars to disagree on its dating. However, as a group the spectacle images from Leptis Magna and its immediate vicinity, such as Zliten, are unique compositions of high artistic quality. The images appear to be the product of a handful of workshops that were likely familiar with the wide array of images that appeared in different houses. These images must also be seen as part of a dialogue between patrons who were of a similar social status and thus continually in competition with one another. In addition to the images, the amphitheater of Leptis Magna itself indicates that spectacles were greatly appreciated.

In contrast to the patrons in Leptis Magna, the patron of the villa in Bad Kreuznach likely had other reasons for choosing a gladiatorial image for his house. Bad Kreuznach is located in the immediate proximity to the Roman limes where the Roman army was visibly present. These two factors might have influenced the patron who might have been more inclined to display his enjoyment of Roman entertainments and his own cultural affiliation in contrast to the people who were not Romans. Perhaps he also appreciated swordsmanship and other martial skills.

Furthermore, the *munus* was always closely linked to the city of Rome because the largest and most opulent *munera* were offered there by Roman emperors, and, they were subsequently commemorated on coins that were dispersed throughout the empire.[416] The *munus* was considered quintessentially Roman. In some cases, as in the mosaic in Bad

[416] See the work by Elkins 2006, 2009b, 2009a.

Kreuznach, it appears that images of the *munus* were consciously employed as markers of Roman culture and of the patron's own cultural affiliation.[417]

A regional approach to spectacle imagery would likely be one of the most interesting avenues for future research. Rather than limiting oneself to elite forms of evidence for the *munus*, gathering all evidence from a single site would likely shed light on the way the inhabitants of a particular city engaged with the *munus*. A site well-suited for such an approach is Ephesos with its rich array of sources, including terracotta figurines, graffiti, architecture, inscriptions, literature, skeletal remains of gladiators, and burial monuments. Some of the better preserved finds were made accessible in a museum exhibition on gladiators. The accompanying catalog is mainly descriptive with very few conclusions about the celebration of the *munus* in Ephesos.[418] By treating this material holistically, it should be possible to examine the engagement of people of all social levels with the *munus*.

This dissertation is only a first foray into the imagery of the *munus*. The information compiled in this study makes it a useful tool for many future discussions, as for example the iconographic study which might be broadened out to include images in stone, on lamp reliefs, etc.

Lastly, this study of spectacle and gladiators might also be helpful in the reassessment of literary evidence, such as Trimalchio's dinner party with which this study began. Rather than view the passages as simply trifling references, Petronius might have intended the references to carry more meaning. Without additional descriptions of the scenes, images of gladiators suggest images of courage, manliness, but also a form of entertainment contemporary with Petronius. As was shown for images from the Roman East, gladiators often appropriated names from myth or likened their fights to mythical battles. Thus, placing images of the Iliad, Odyssey, and gladiators alongside each other might not have been entirely inappropriate, as similar values were attached to all three

[417] The reasons for the choosing an image of spectacle are surprisingly similar to the spectator consumption practices identified by Minowa and Witkowski 2012.
[418] *Gladiatoren in Ephesos: Tod am Nachmittag. Eine Ausstellung im Ephesos Museum Selcuk* 2002.

categories, namely the courageous fight between men who were not afraid of death. However, placing the trivial games of Laenas alongside heroic and significant images of the Iliad and Odyssey was likely cause for laughter.

Figures

Fig. 1: Mosaics showing Venatio scenes (frontal attack on tiger), details; top left to bottom: Carthage (Cat.Nr.6), Cos (Cat.Nr.23), Tusculum (Cat.Nr.75), Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr.57), Smirat (Magerius Mosaic - Cat.Nr.13).

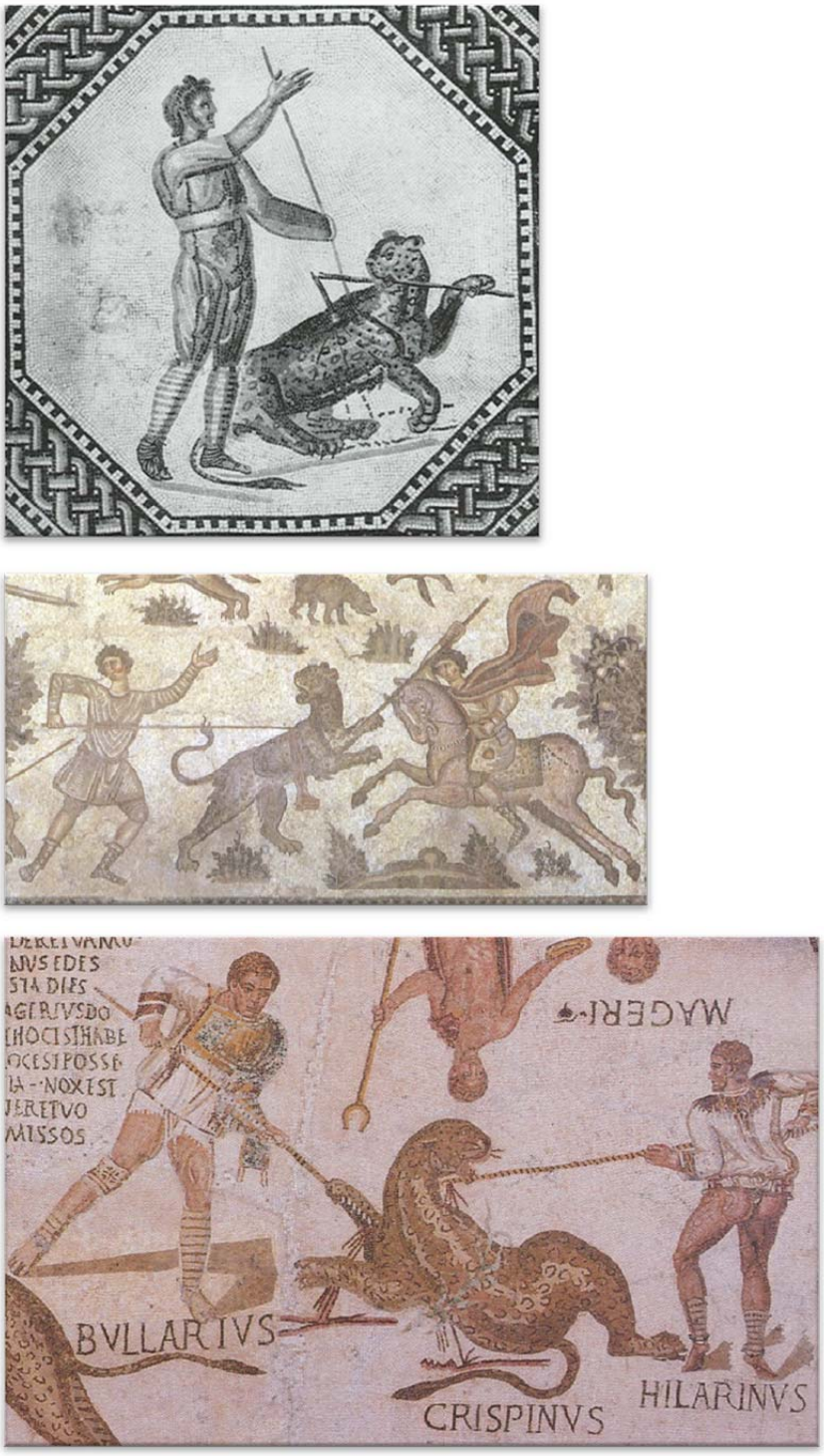

Fig. 2: Mosaics showing *Venatio* scenes (attack with two lances), details; top to bottom: Nenning (Cat.Nr.43**),** Antioch (Cat.Nr.78)**,** Smirat (Magerius Mosaic -Cat.Nr.13).

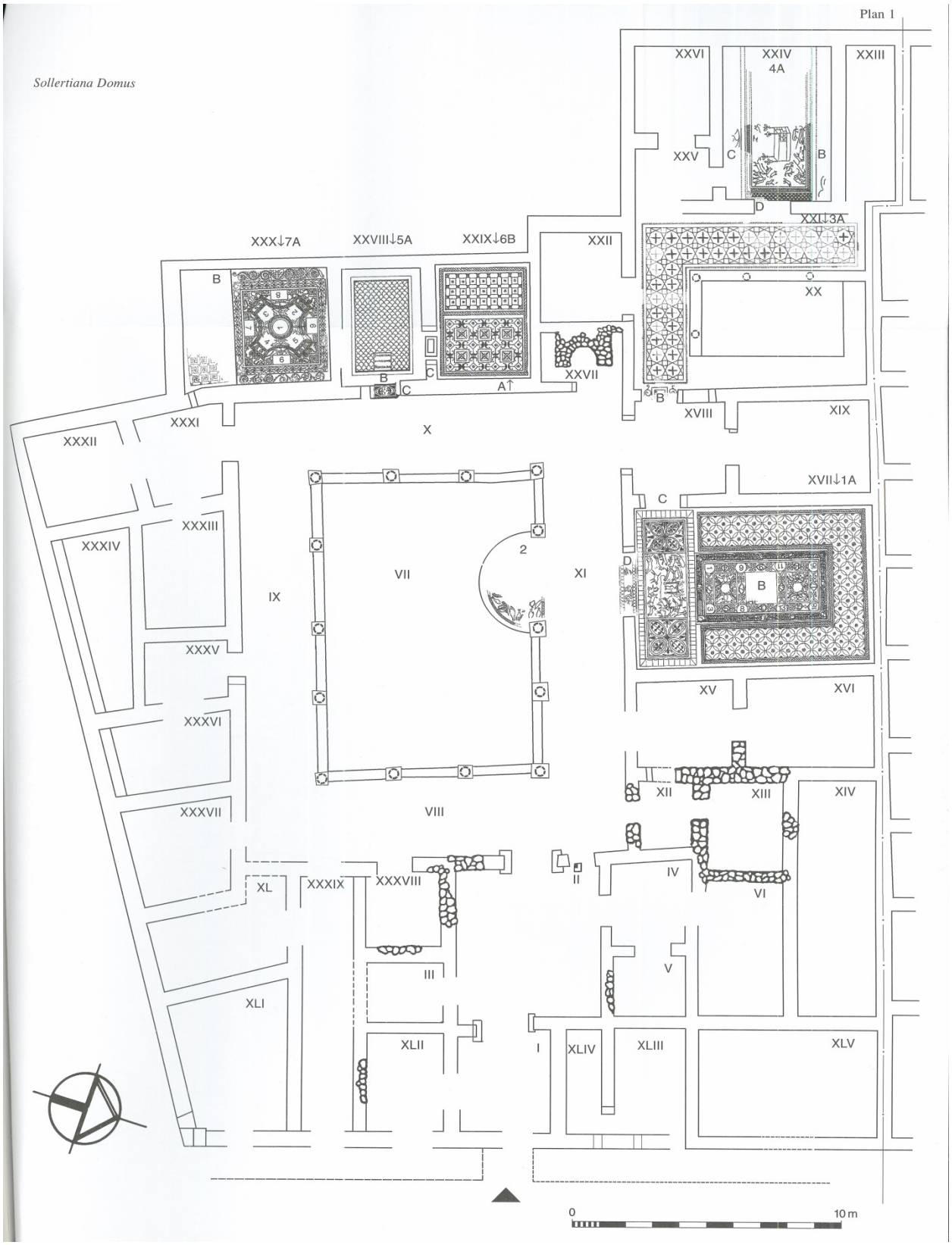

Fig. 3: Sollertiana Domus, El Djem (Cat.Nr. 7)

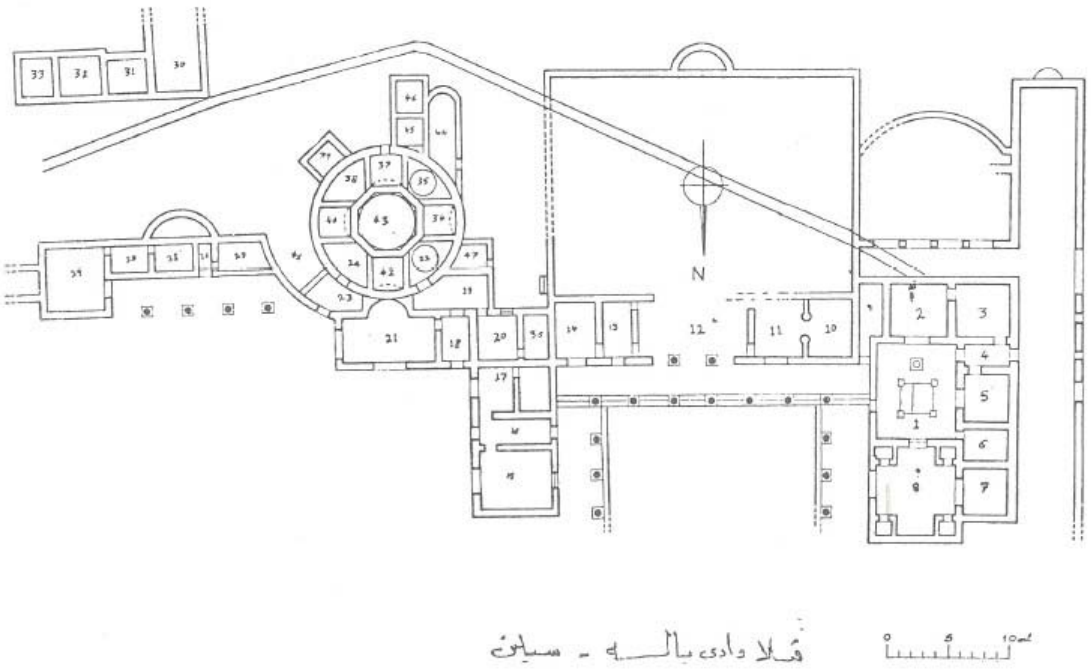

Fig. 4: Silin (Cat.Nr. 11)

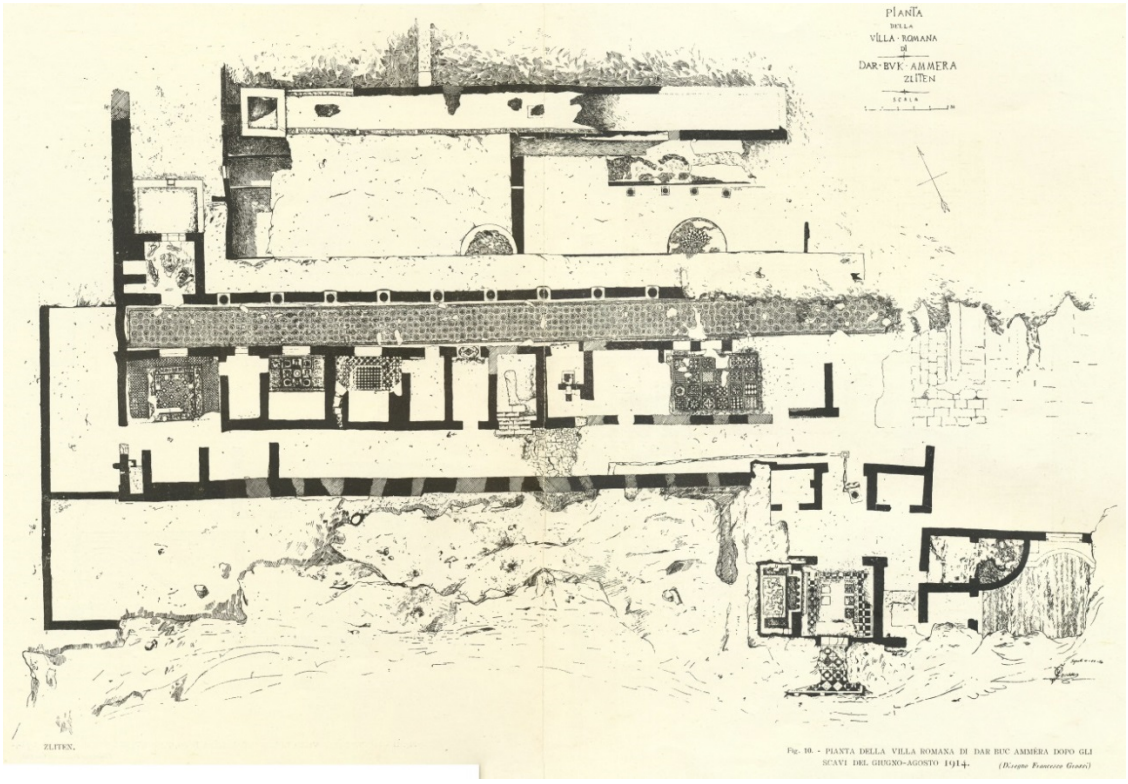

Fig. 5: Zliten (Cat.Nr. 18)

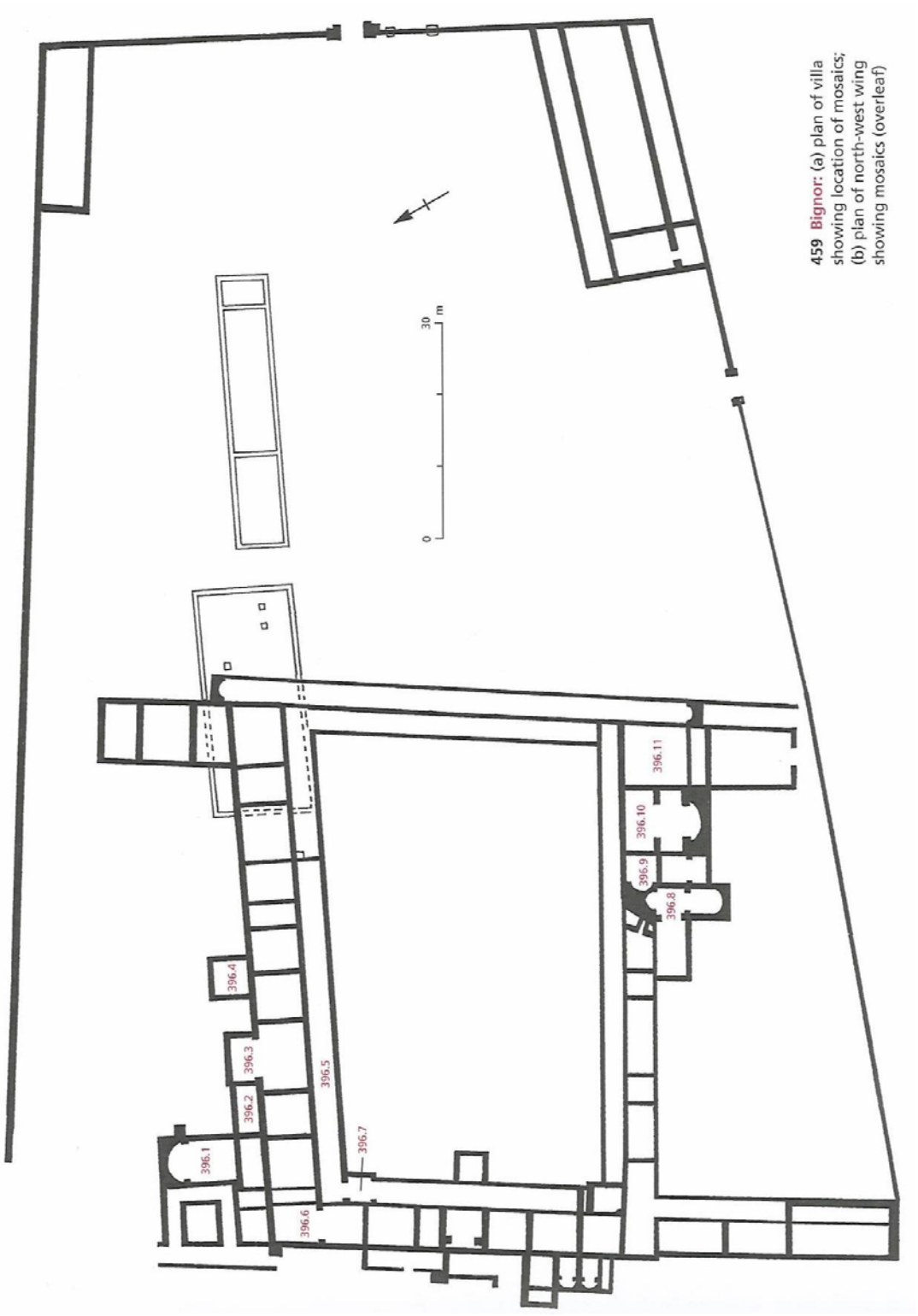

Fig. 6: Bignor (Cat.Nr. 28)

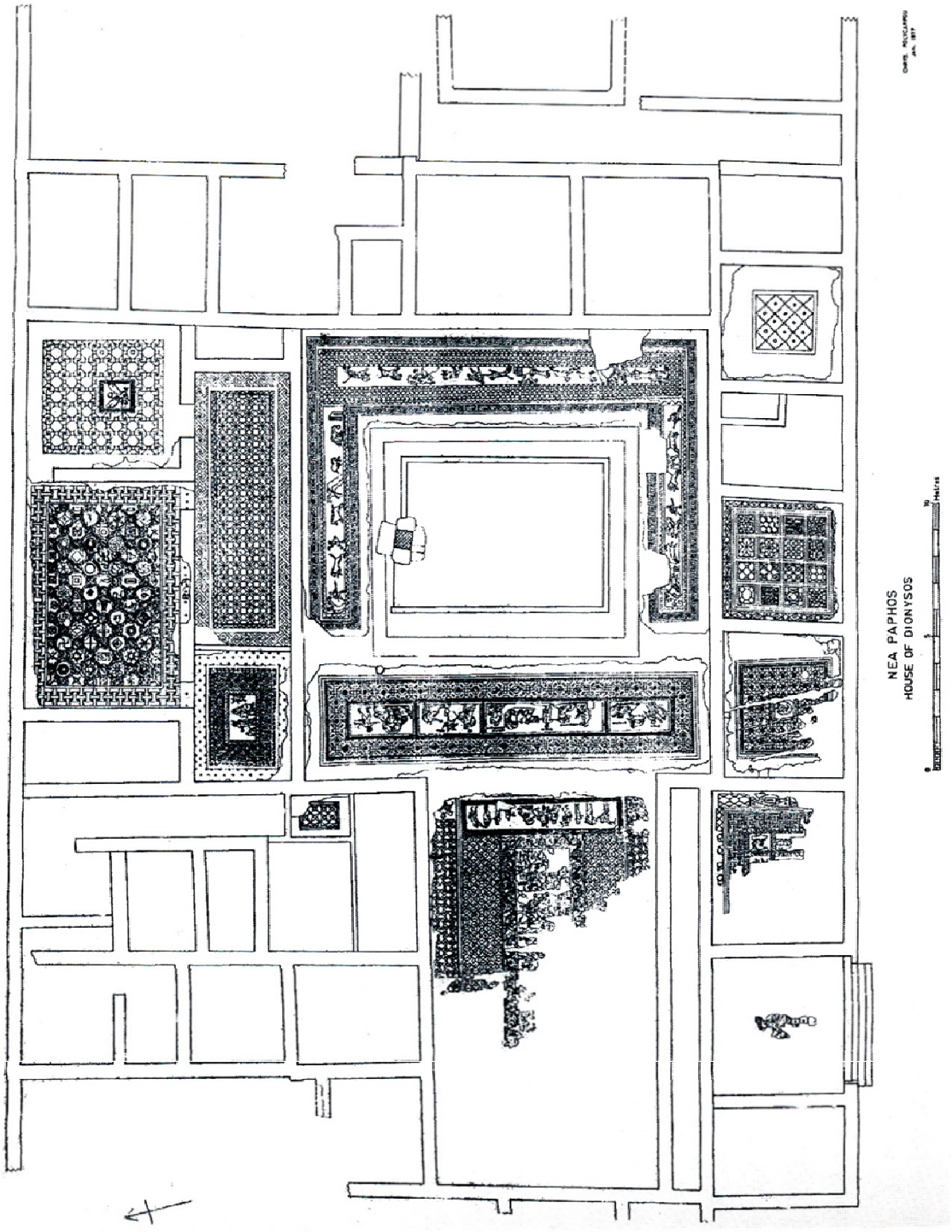

Fig. 7: Paphos (Cat.Nr. 35)

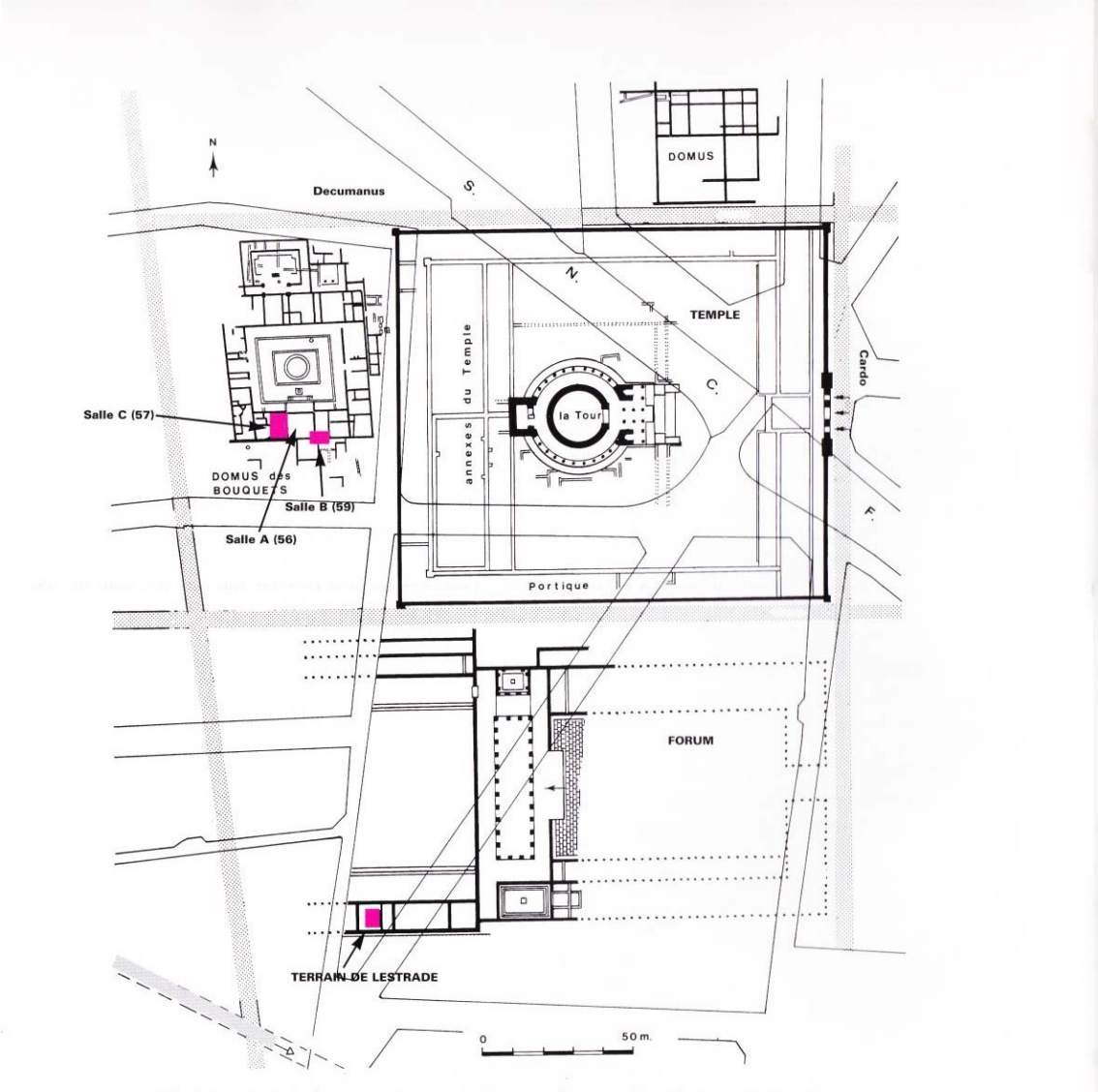

Fig. 8: Périgueux (Cat.Nr. 37, 38)

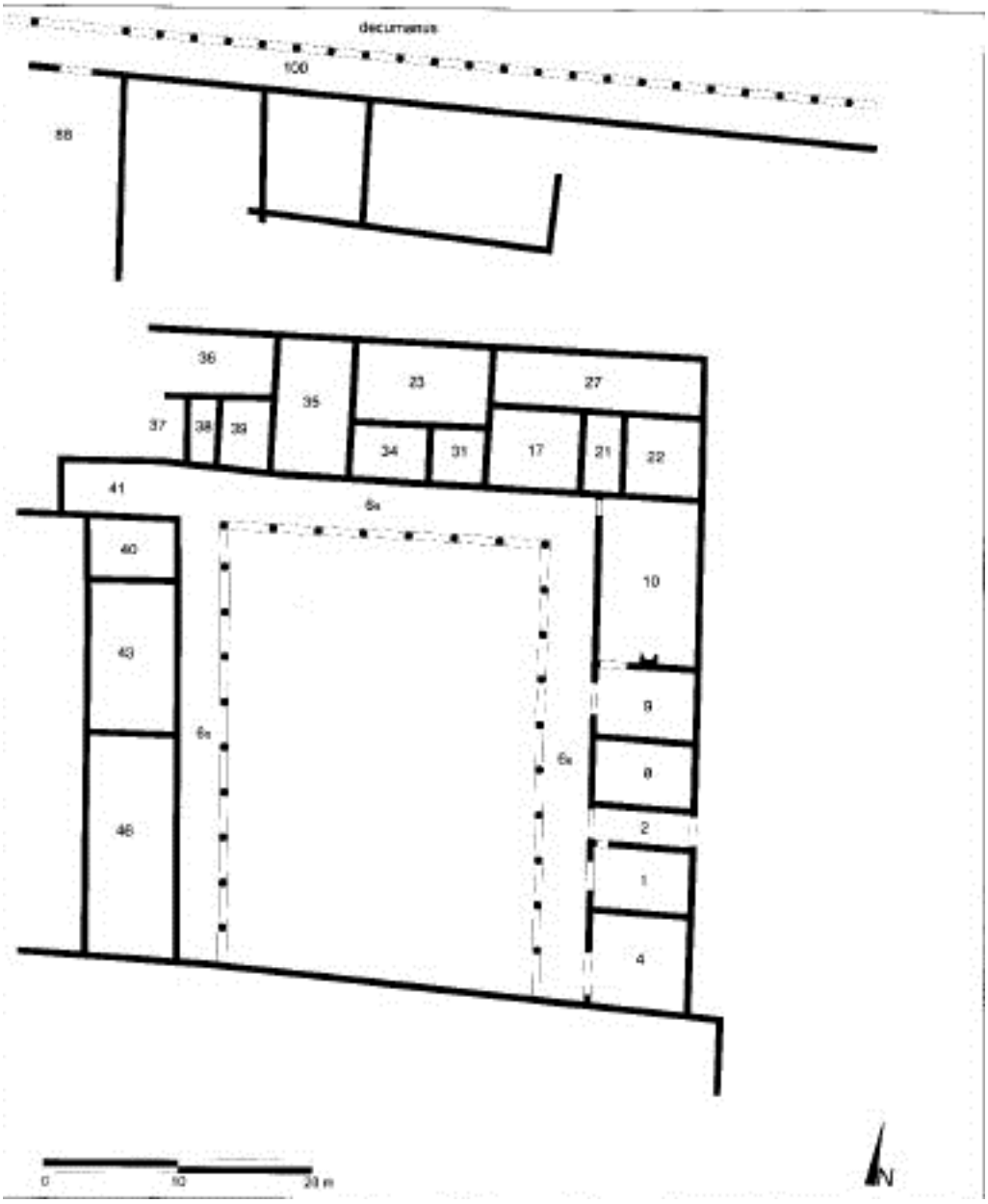

Fig. 9: Périgueux, domus Vésone (Cat.Nr. 38)

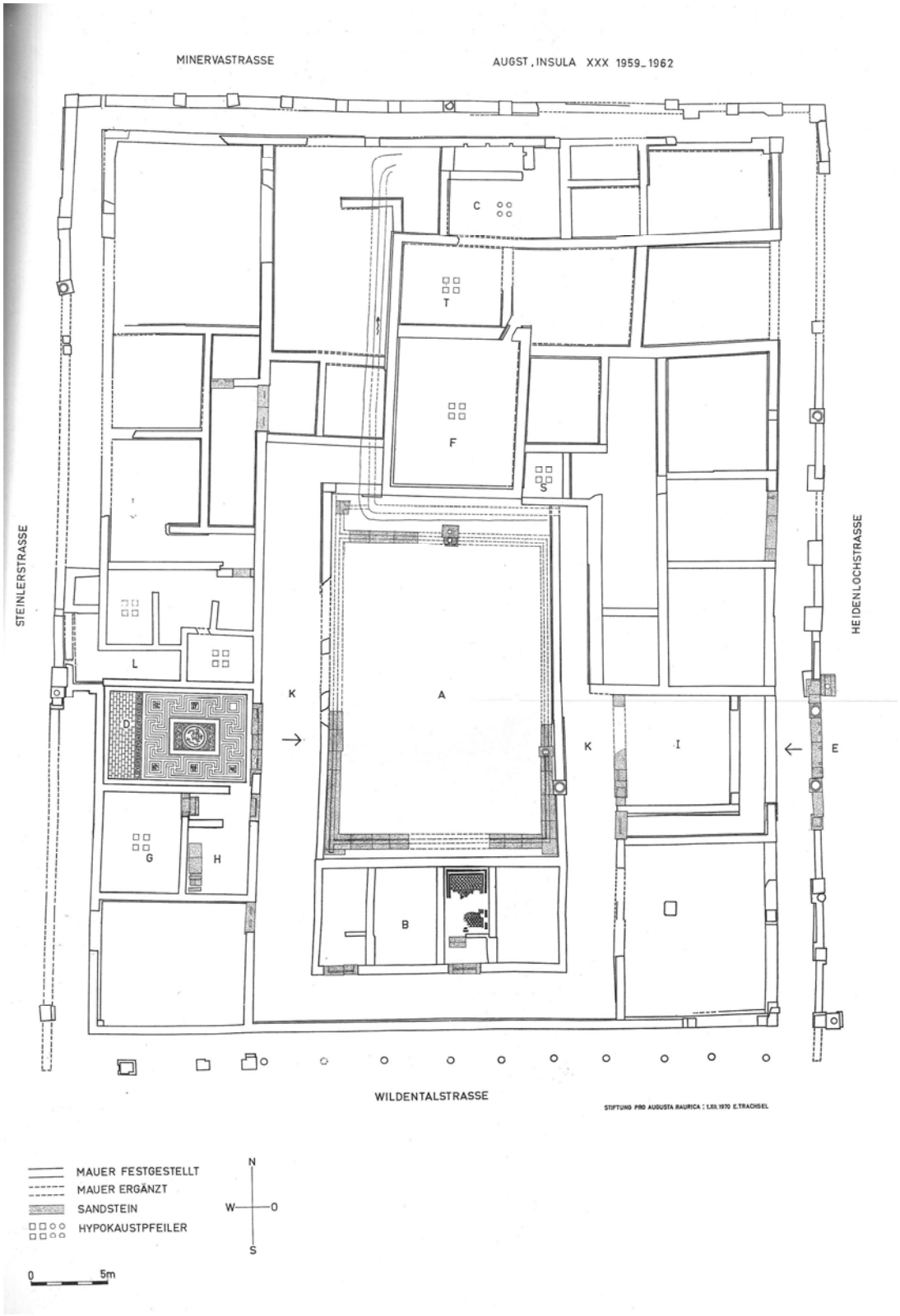

Fig. 10: Augst (Cat.Nr. 39)

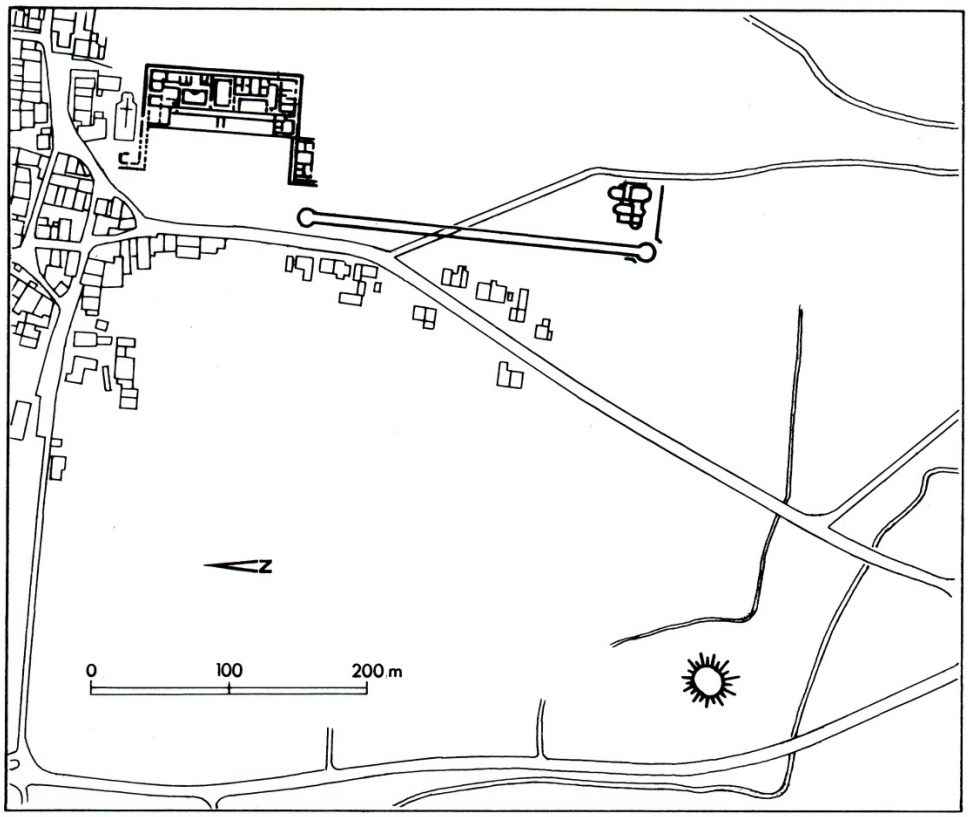

Fig. 11: Nennig (Cat.Nr. 43)

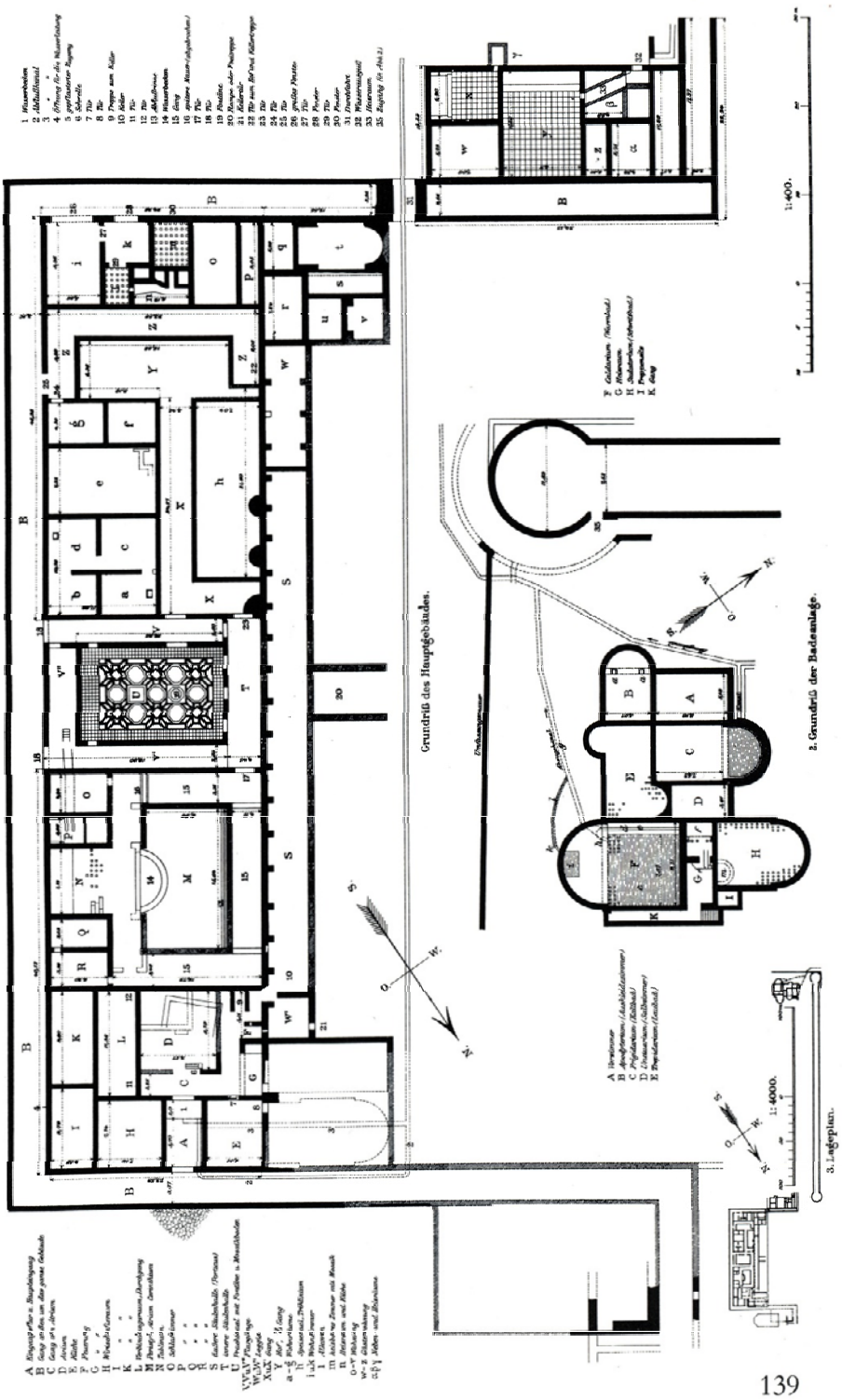

Fig. 12: Nennig (Cat.Nr. 43)

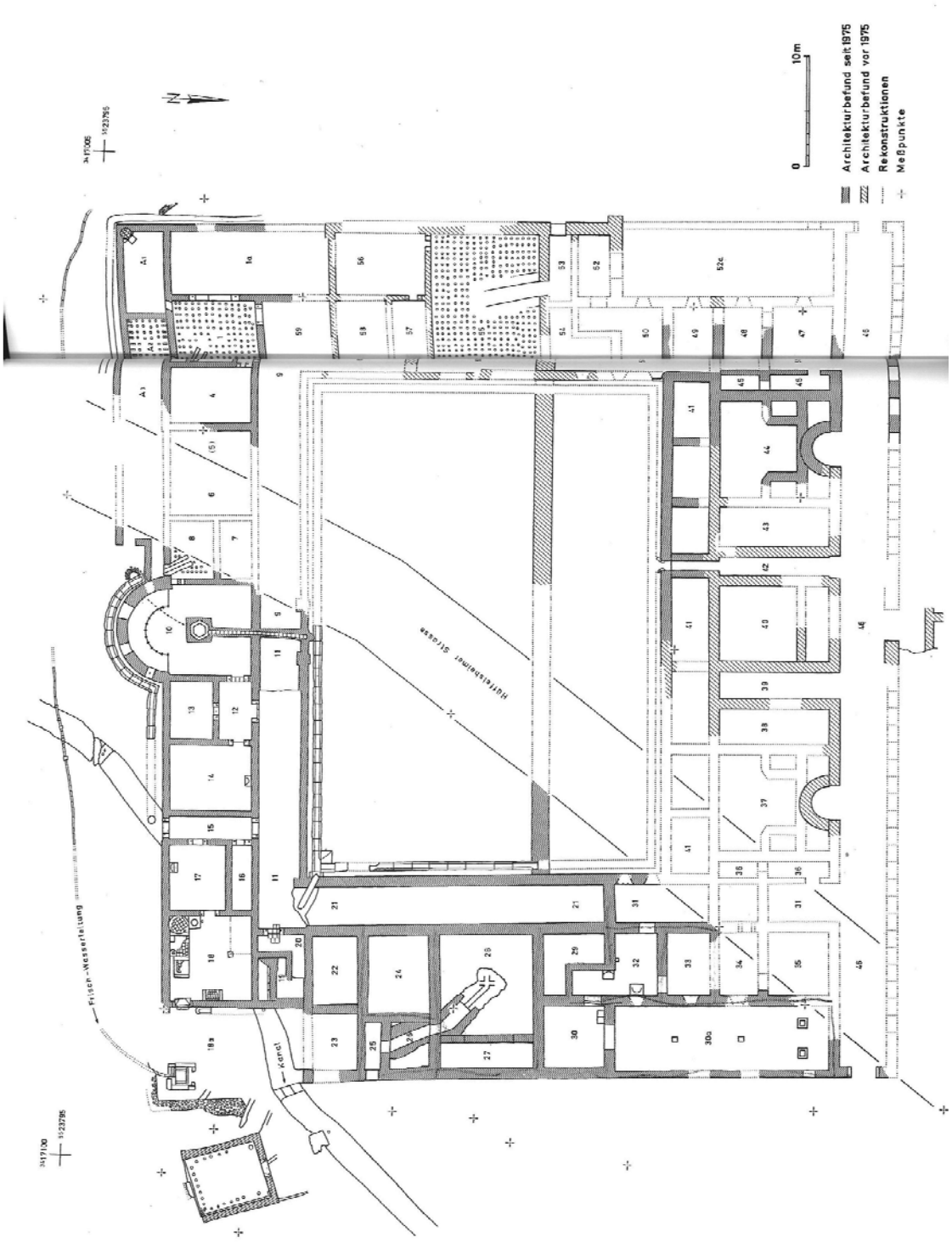

Fig. 13: Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr. 57)

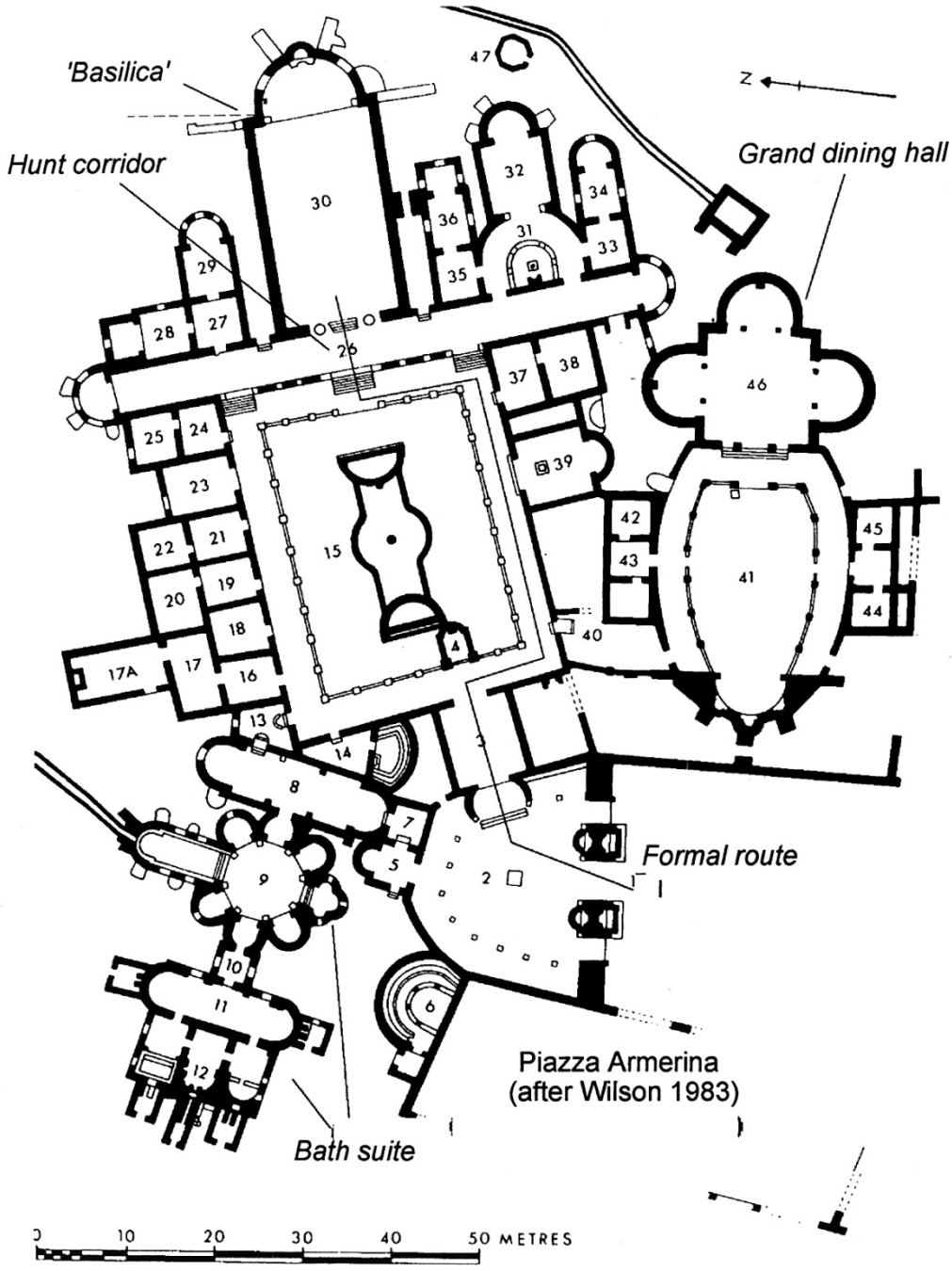

Fig. 14: Piazza Armerina (Cat.Nr. 68)

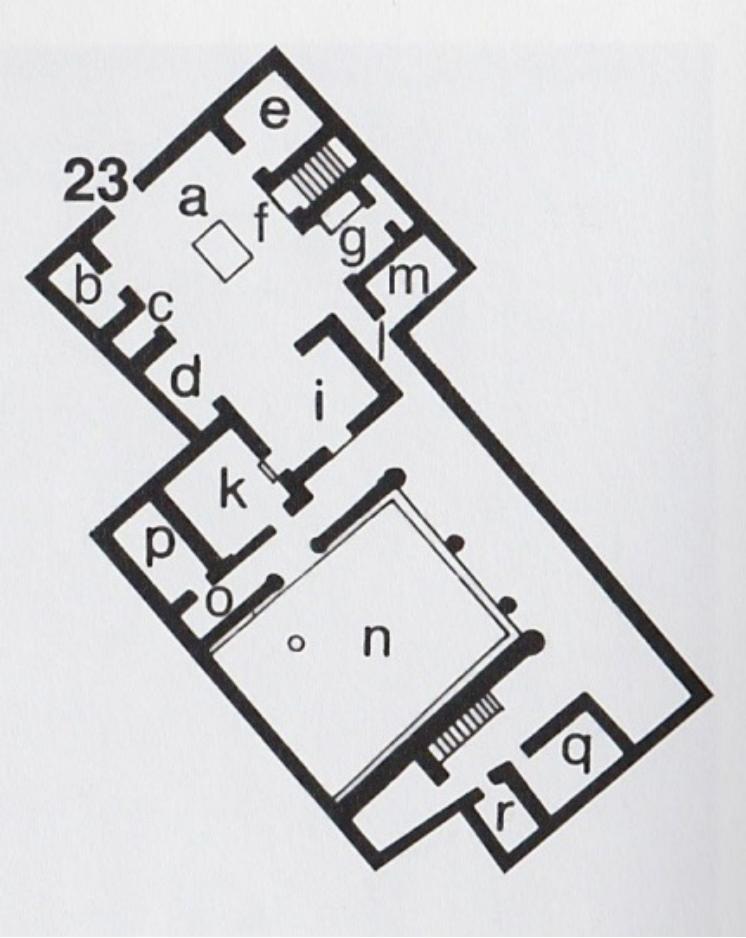

Fig. 15: Pompeii, house of Actius Anicetus (Cat.Nr. 70)

Fig. 16: Sollertiana Domus, El Djem (Cat.Nr. 7)

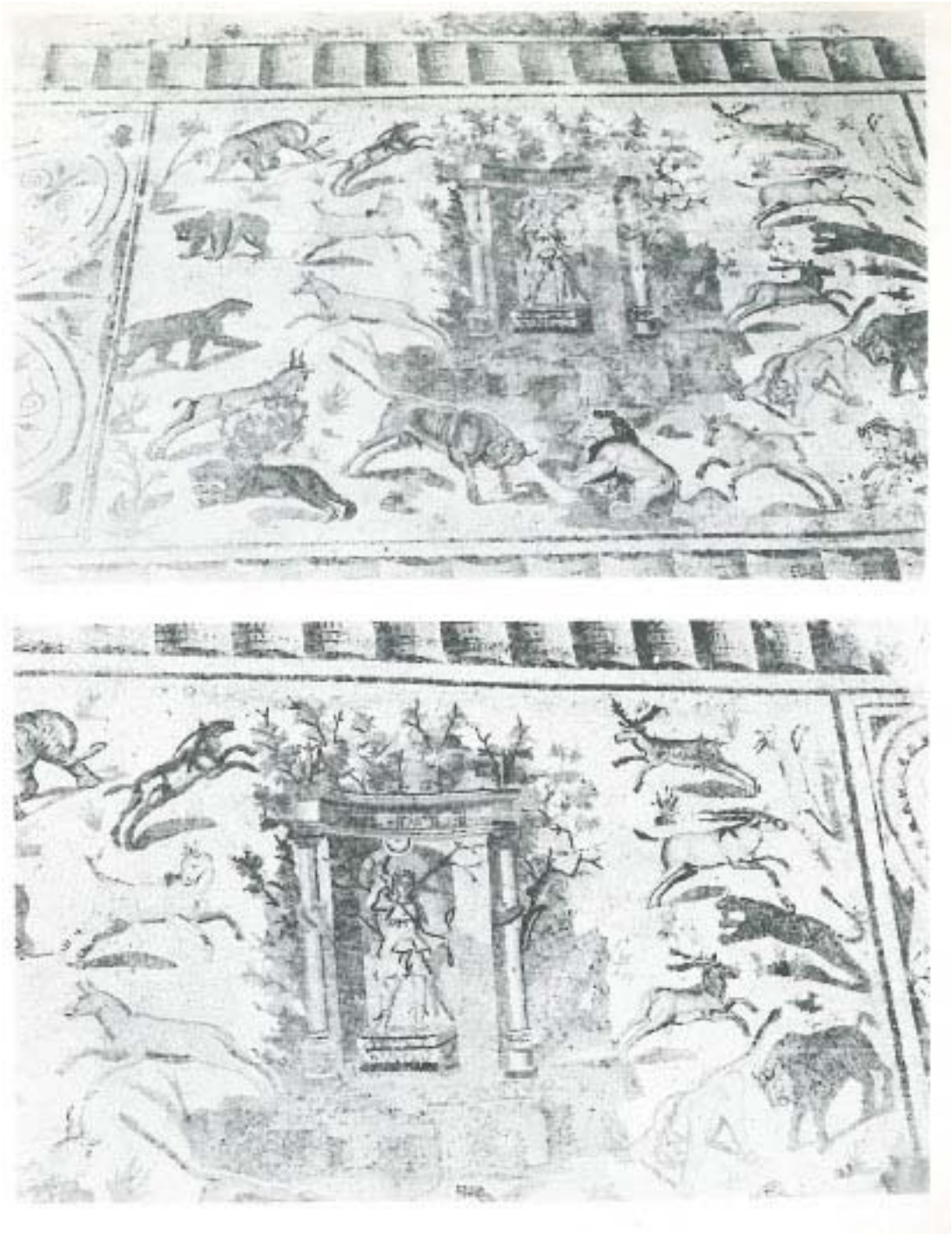

Fig. 17: Sollertiana Domus, El Djem *(*Cat.Nr. 8*)*

Fig. 18: Leptis Magna (Cat.Nr. 10)

Fig. 19: Smirat (Cat.Nr. 13)

Fig. 20: Zliten (Cat.Nr. 18)

Fig. 21: Cos (Cat.Nr. 19)

Fig. 22: Cos (Cat.Nr. 20)

Fig. 23: Miletus (Cat.Nr. 26)

Fig. 24: Orthosia (Cat.Nr. 27)

Fig. 25: Bignor (Cat.Nr. 28)

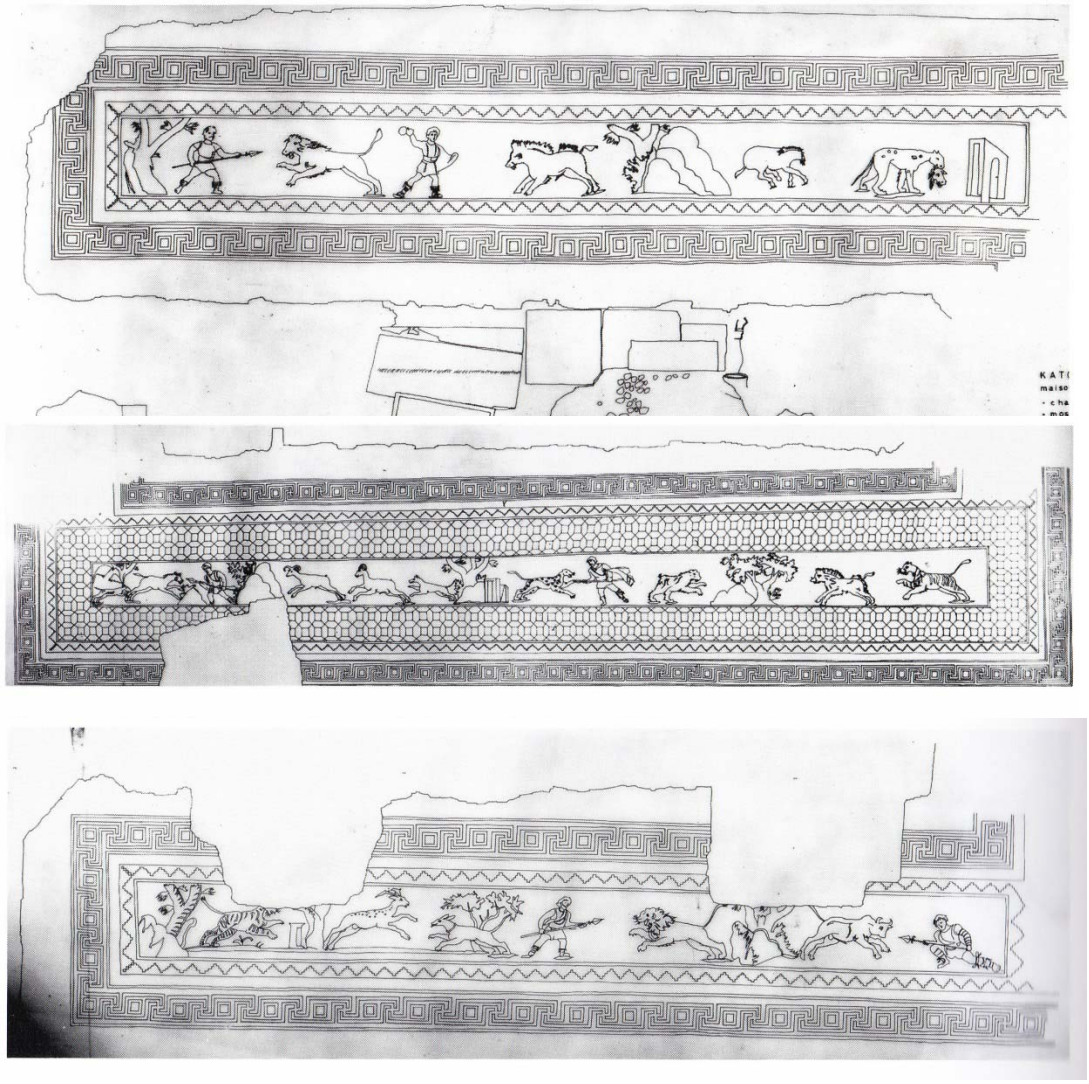

Fig. 26: Paphos (Cat.Nr. 35)

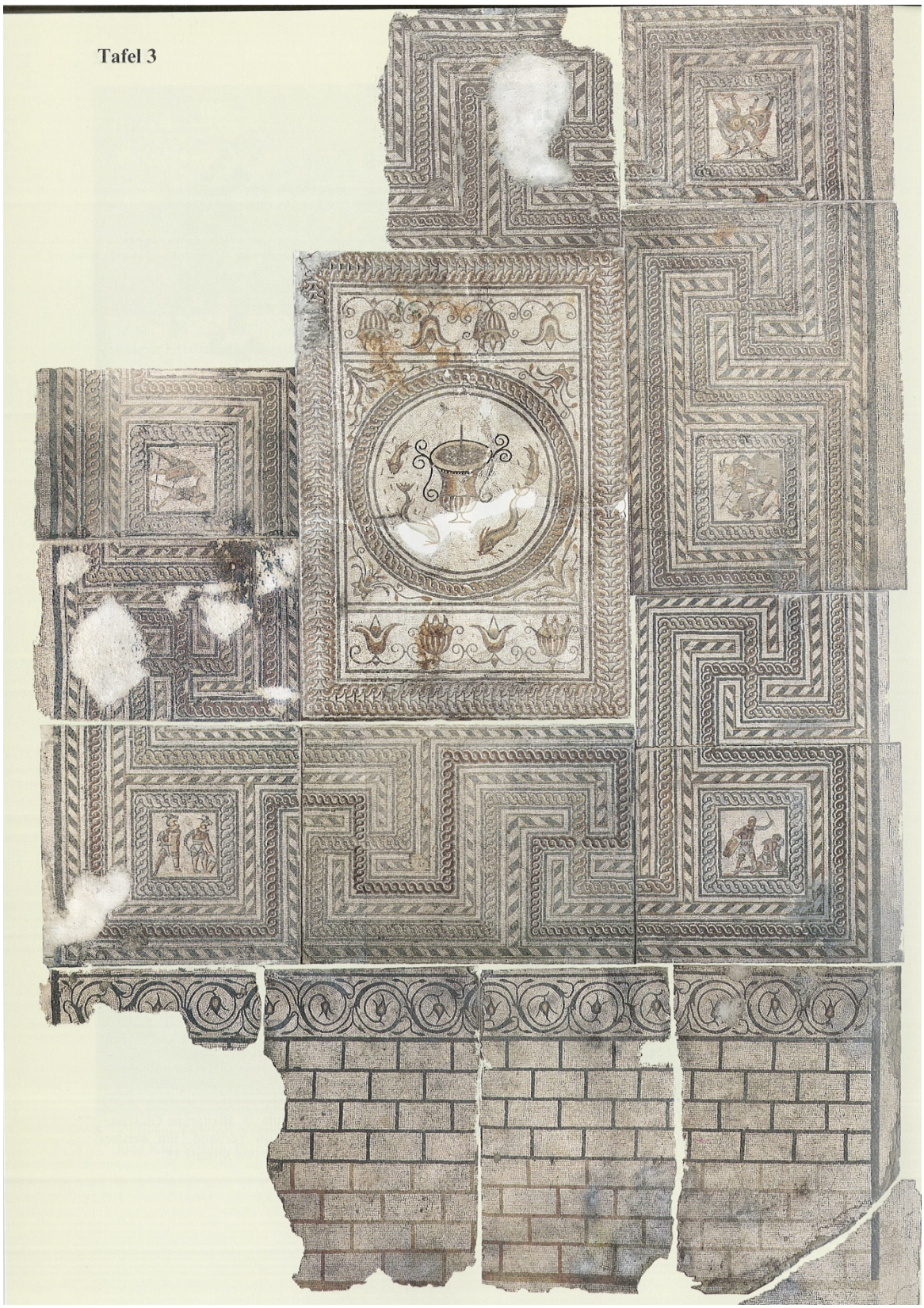

Fig. 27: Augst (Cat.Nr. 39)

Fig. 28: Augst (Cat.Nr. 39)

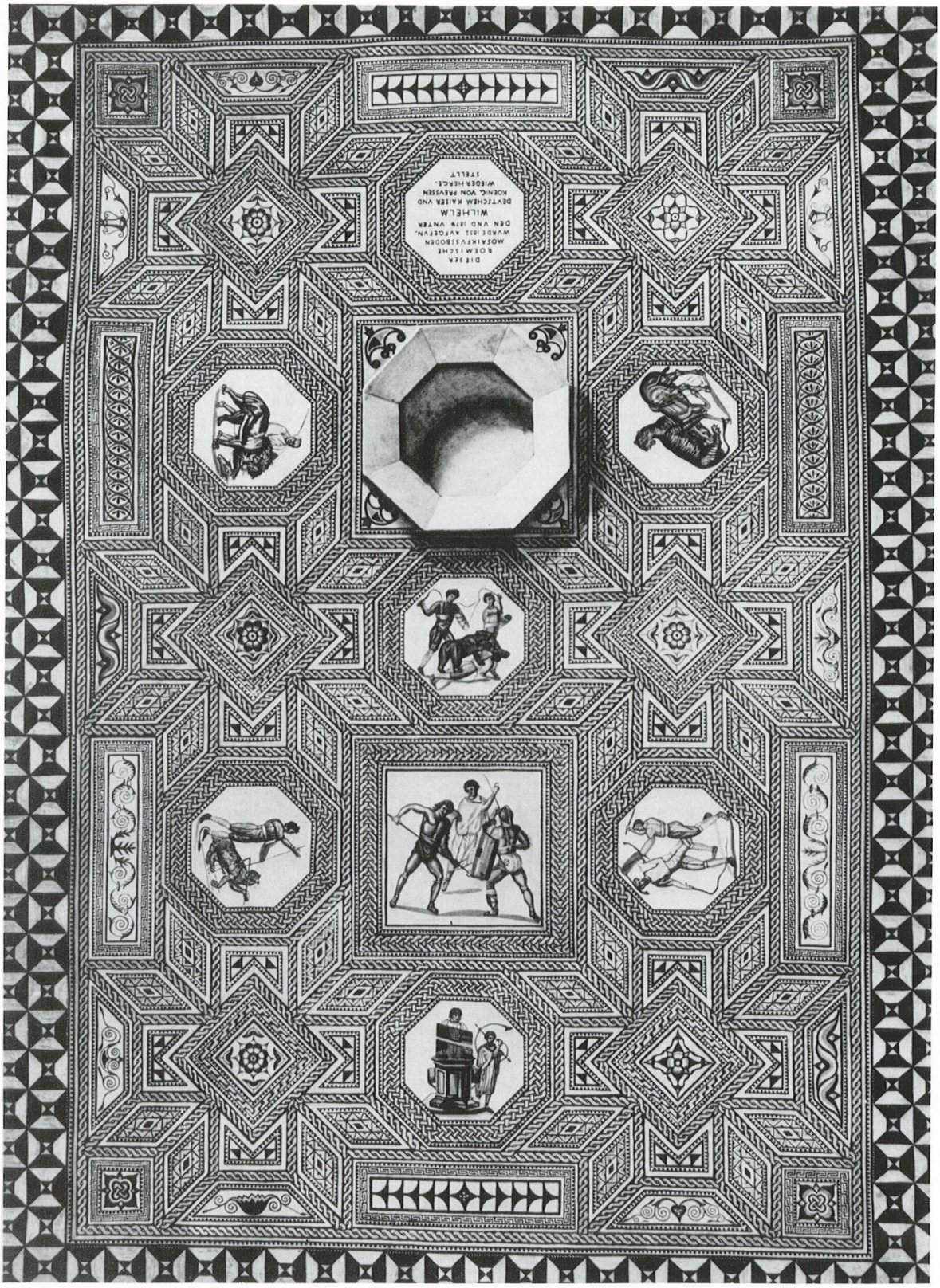

Fig. 29: Nennig (Cat.Nr. 43)

Fig. 30: Aix-en-Provence (Cat.Nr. 51)

Fig. 31: Bad Kreuznach (Cat.Nr. 57)

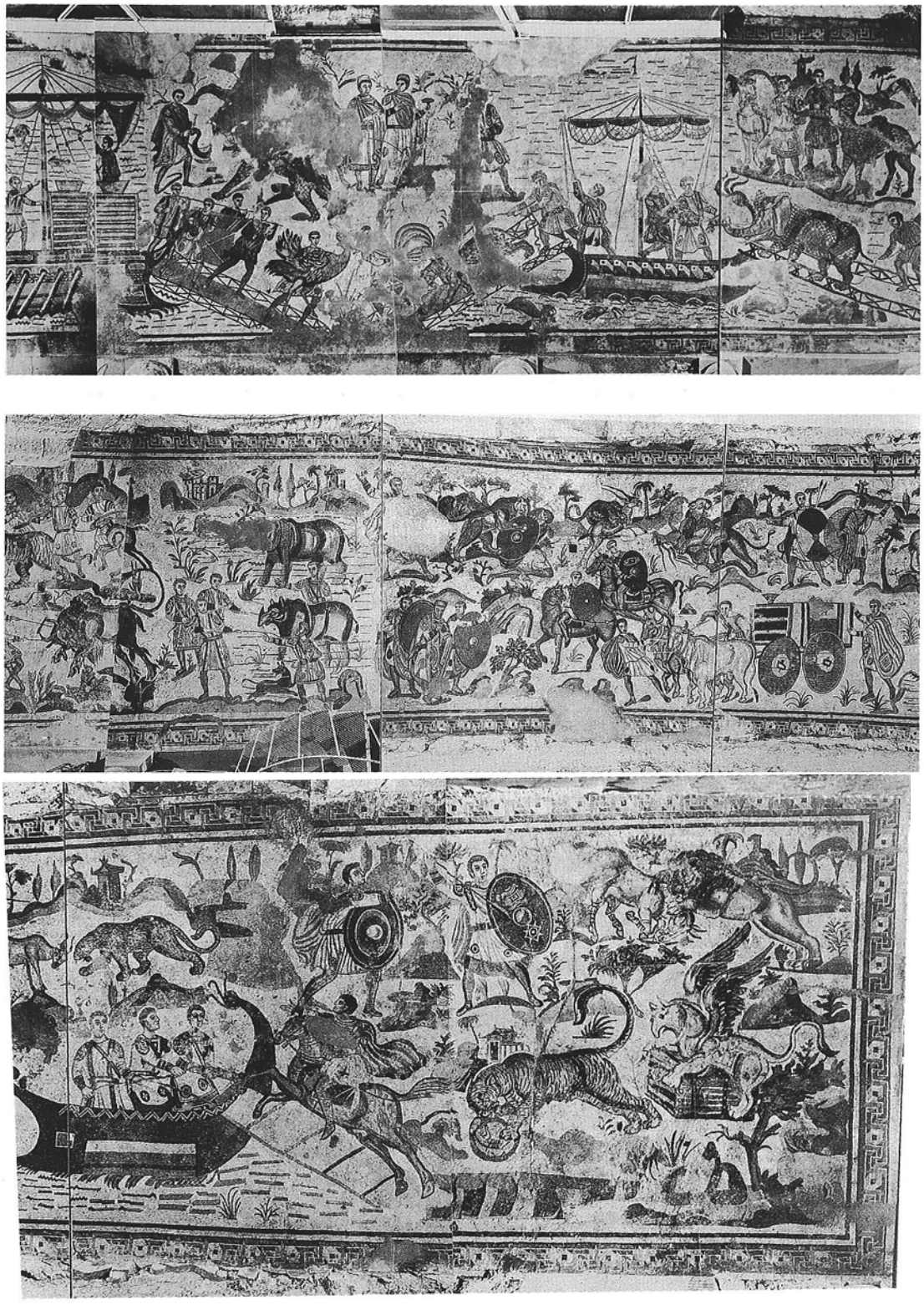

Fig. 32: Piazza Armerina (Cat.Nr. 68)

Appendices

Appendix I: Gladiatorial Types

The following types of gladiators fought against one another in public contests. Each gladiator had a standard set of weapons and armor according to his *armatura* or gladiatorial type. This dictated his fighting style, if there was considerable variation. Swords and shields could vary in size, and also left-handed gladiators are attested. Left-handed fighters were particularly valued because most gladiators had less experience in fighting a left-handed opponent and the fights were thus more exciting.[419] The gladiatorial *armaturae* developed over time and characteristics of early types of gladiators, such as the *samnis* or the *gallus*, were adapted to give birth to new types of gladiators.[420] There is some confusion among scholars about these developments. Some differences have been established between practices in east and west, as Carter (1999) was able to illustrate in his epigraphic study of gladiatorial inscriptions found in the east. For instance the term *hoplomachus* referred to a type of gladiator in the west but to a special trainer in the east.

Eques[421]

According to Mosci Sassi, the literary sources indicate that the *eques* was considered to be a traditional gladiatorial combat type; however, it was not a common type of fight and

[419] On variation of weapons in the depiction of gladiators on terra sigillata, see Mann 2011, 99; Kazek 2012; Mann 2013, 26.

[420] The armor, weapons, and general appearance of the various *armaturae* has been extensively studied by a variety of scholars. Mosci Sassi 1992 published a very accessible lexicon of gladiatorial terminology explaining the use of the various terms in the literary and epigraphic sources. Carter 1999 provided a good discussion of gladiatorial types in his dissertation where he discussed the appearance of specific types in the east and also gave a good survey of past scholarship. Junkelmann 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2008 has been studying gladiatorial types for a long time. His approach is heavily influenced by experimental archaeology and his personal preferences in reconstructing the garments. Kazek 2012 studied the evidence of the terra sigillata in order to gain a better understanding of variation in the gladiatorial types in Gaul. Although his study is very thorough, he does not reference any of the above mentioned authors. In addition, the use of very small images on terra sigillata for iconographic studies of gladiators is not entirely convincing.

[421] Mosci Sassi 1992, 99-101; Carter 1999, 96-7; Junkelmann 2000a, 45, 2002, 34, 2008, 124, fig. 92; Dodge 2009, 33; Mann 2013, 25.

such a contest was the mark of an exceptional *munus*. As the name indicates, the gladiators entered on horseback but dismounted at some point to then fight face-to-face. *Equites* typically only fought against each other. The *eques* wore a helmet and tunic. His weapon was the lance and a small round shield for protection. It is thought that he also used a sword after he dismounted.

Essedarius[422]

The term is derived from the word *essedum* which is a type of chariot used by the Gauls. This type of gladiator is mentioned frequently in inscriptions. The exact appearance of this gladiator is unclear, however, it appears to have been a very active fighting style that involved a chariot. A relief in Aphrodisias depicts this gladiator with a helmet and shield wearing a loin cloth and greaves on both legs.

Hoplomachus[423]

This term differs in meaning in the east and west. While it refers to a type of heavily armed gladiator in the west, in the east it was used to refer to a special trainer in arms. This type of gladiator was similar to the *secutor* and may have been a late form of the *samnis*. He was commonly paired with the *thraex*. The *hoplomachus* was a heavily armed gladiator and typically had a long shield, an ornate helmet, and a greave on his left leg.

Murmillo[424]

The *murmillo* is one of the earliest types of gladiators and was previously also referred to as *gallus*. It is thought that the depiction of a fish on his helmet gave him the nickname μύρμη or μύρμυρος (fish). He is known to have usually fought against the *retiarius* (or fisherman). In the course of the 2nd century CE the *murmillo* was commonly

[422] Mosci Sassi 1992, 101-2; Carter 1999, 95-6; Junkelmann 2000a, 46, 70, fig. 21, 2002, 34-5, 2008, 117, fig. 75.
[423] Mosci Sassi 1992, 120-1; Carter 1999, 85-6; Junkelmann 2002, 35-6, 2008, 122, fig. 88; Dodge 2011, 31; Mann 2013, 25, 9.
[424] Mosci Sassi 1992, 144-5; Carter 1999, 88; Junkelmann 2000a, 42, 56-8, fig. 17, 2002, 36-7, 2008, 109, fig. 54; Dodge 2011, 31; Mann 2013, 24-8.

matched with the *thraex*. The *murmillo* only wore a loin cloth girded around his waist. He was armed with a long curving rectangular shield and sword. He wore a protective *manica* (segmental arm protection) on his sword arm, a padded greave on his left leg and a leg protector on his right leg. He also wore a round helmet.

Paegniarius[425]

This was not a serious fight. The aim of the fight was to entertain the spectators with burlesque one-on-one combats. This type of fighting style is only attested in inscriptions and one literary source (Suet., Calig. 26,5).

Provocator[426]

This gladiator type appears to have been a standard gladiator at the time of Cicero and was similar to the *samnis*. There is some confusion about this gladiator and his exact armor remains unclear. Carter points out that the name refers to tactics rather than a form of armor, namely that he "provokes" fights. Inscriptions provide further evidence for this theory: on a funerary inscription a gladiator's fighting style is described with the adjective *provocans*, rather than the noun *provocator*. The *provocator* is easily recognizable by his rectangular chest-plate. No other *armatura* wore protective gear on its torso. Typically he also wore a masked helmet, a rectangular shield, a sword, a greave on his left leg, and a *manica* on his right arm.

Retiarius[427]

The *retiarius* or fisherman is one of the most easily recognizable gladiators and also the most frequently depicted. Typically he fought against the *murmillo* but was later commonly paired with the *secutor*. The origin of this gladiator type is not clear. He was very

[425] Mosci Sassi 1992, 146-7; Junkelmann 2000a, 46, 70, fig. 21, 2002, 37.
[426] Mosci Sassi 1992, 161; Carter 1999, 893-95; Junkelmann 2000a, 46, 63-4, fig. 21, 2002, 37, 2008, 113, fig. 66; Dodge 2011, 33; Mann 2013, 25, 9.
[427] Mosci Sassi 1992, 162-4; Carter 1999, 87; Junkelmann 2000a, 64-9, 2002, 37, 2008, 125, fig. 96; Dodge 2011, 32; Kazek 2012, 146; Mann 2013, 24-5, 9.

lightly dressed and was only covered by a loin cloth. He wore a large arm guard on his left arm that included a visor-like shoulder covering (*galerus*) and also protective covering on his legs. He did not wear a helmet or shield. His typical weapon was the *rete* (net) as well as the trident and a small dagger.

Samnis[428]

This is the oldest type of gladiator. He was popular in the Republic but disappeared in the Augustan period. It is likely that the hoplomachus and *secutor* took on some of the characteristics of the *samnis*. Dodge equates this gladiator with the *hoplomachus*.[429] The *samnis* wore a *manica* on his right arm, an *ocrea* on his left leg, a belt, a short sword, a helmet with a large plume, and a large shield.

Scissor[430]

This type of gladiator is only mentioned in one inscription. Very little is known about this fighting style and it is difficult to identify it in depictions. Junkelmann believes that it was similar to the *secutor* and used a hook on his left hand instead of a shield. He reconstructs the fighter with chain mail, a helmet and greaves.

Secutor[431]

This gladiator type is first mentioned by Suetonius in the 2nd century CE. The term might refer to his tactics rather than his armor since the *secutor* is the pursuer, or as Artemidorus described him, he is the one who always chases. It is thought that the *secutor* was also referred to as the *contrarete* (or *contraretiarius*).[432] The *secutor* wore heavy armor

[428] Mosci Sassi 1992, 168-9; Carter 1999, 85; Junkelmann 2000a, 45, 2002, 37; Dodge 2011, 31; Mann 2013, 24-8.
[429] Dodge 2011, 31 Dodge 2011, 31.
[430] Mosci Sassi 1992, 170-1; Junkelmann 2002, 37-8, 2008, 111, fig. 60.
[431] Mosci Sassi 1992, 171-2; Carter 1999, 88-90; Junkelmann 2000a, 46, 69-70, fig. 21, 2002, 38; Dodge 2011, 32; Mann 2013, 24-5, 9.
[432] Dodge 2011, 32 claims that this type of gladiator is the most recognizable gladiator. This is incorrect since the *secutor* and the *hoplomachus* are easily confused.

that included a large, rectangular shield, a sword, a helmet with crest but no visor, a loin cloth and wide belt, and a manica on his right arm and *ocreae* on both legs.

Thraex[433]

It is generally thought that the name is derived from fighters in Thracian armor, similarly to the *samnis*. He is usually paired with the *hoplomachus* but is also known to have fought against the *murmillo*, or another *thraex*. The *thraex* typically holds a small round shield, a *parma*, although it can also be rectangular in some cases and is protected by *ocreae* on both legs. His weapon is a *sica*, a curved sword. His helmet has a visor.

[433] Mosci Sassi 1992, 177-8; Carter 1999, 86-7; Junkelmann 2000a, 45, 59-60, fig. 20, 2002, 38, 2008, 120, fig. 82; Dodge 2011, 31-2; Mann 2013, 24, 8.

Appendix II: Names of Men and Beasts on Mosaics

In the following chart, names inscribed on floor mosaics showing public spectacles are given, along with the catalog number in the present study, and the site at which the inscriptions were found.

The mosaic from Tusculum (Cat.Nr.75) has a large number of names, but the mosaic has not been studied in depth and as a result of various reconstruction attempts has been altered considerably. I have not included the names from the Tusculum mosaic in this list because it is unclear whether the names are ancient or later reconstructions.

Greek			**Latin**		
EYHNIWN	1	Andania	Bonifatius	5	Carthage
GA(IOS?)	3	Patras	Crudelis (bear)	5	Carthage
KALLIMORPHOS	3	Patras	Omicida (bear)	5	Carthage
TEIMOKRATHS	3	Patras	Gloriosus (bear)	10	Radès
TYDEUS	19	Cos	Braciatus (bear)	10	Radès
LEUKASPIS	19	Cos	Simplicius (bear)	10	Radès
PAKTWLOS	19	Cos	Alecsandria (bear)	10	Radès
NYMPHERWS	19	Cos	Fedra (bear)	10	Radès
PERSEUS	19	Cos	Nilus (bear)	10	Radès
AIGIALOS	20	Cos	(Crin)itus (bear)	10	Radès
ZEPHYROS	20	Cos	Lusius Morinus	10	Radès
ULAS	20	Cos	(venator)		
ADIAMAKTOS	24	Cos	Romanus	11	Smirat
THOUREINOS	27	Orthosia	Luxurius	11	Smirat
LANARIS			Crispinus	11	Smirat
LYTRAS	34	Kourion	Victor	11	Smirat
DAREIOS	34	Kourion	Mamertinus	11	Smirat
MARGAREIHS	34	Kourion	Spittara	11	Smirat
ELLHNIKOS	34	Kourion	Bullarius	11	Smirat
			Hilarinus	11	Smirat
			Species	36	Nin

Martialis	36	Nin
Senianus	40	Metz
Beryllus	51	Aix-en-Provence
an Ianuarius	73	Rome
Astyanax	74	Rome
Kalendio	74	Rome
Symmachius	74	Rome
Maternus	74	Rome
Habilis (referee)	74	Rome
Caecro(os)	76	Verona
Siripus	77	Augsburg
Crispus	77	Augsburg
Leonides	77	Augsburg
Alpus	77	Augsburg
Lytras	77	Augsburg
Aprius	77	Augsburg
Aiax	77	Augsburg
Antonio	77	Augsburg
Manlius	77	Augsburg
Palumbus	77	Augsburg
Astir	77	Augsburg

Appendix III: Catalog

The catalog is organized alphabetically first by Roman province (according to designations of the 2nd century CE) and then by site. The individual sites are referred to by their most common name, i.e. some are referred to by their ancient and some by their modern toponyms.

I have included all images that are in any way associated with the events of the *munus*, i.e. gladiatorial combat, *venationes*, animal fights, and executions. Images that have incorrectly been identified as gladiatorial combats or *venationes* in past scholarship are included but have been marked with an asterisk (*).

Achaia

Cat.Nr.1 Andania

Findspot:	unknown	Current Location:	Museum Kalamata
Date:	5th - 6th century CE (Waywell)	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*
Description:	A central *venatio* mosaic is surrounded by smaller framed depictions also featuring images from the arena. The *venatio* mosaic depicts men armed with whips and lances along with animals surrounding them. The animals include a wild boar, a panther, other wild cats, a bull, a deer, a rabbit, and a hunting dog. The other arena scenes feature chariots pulled by panthers.		
Site:	The site, including the mosaic, was not entirely excavated and remains largely unpublished.		
Literature:	Waywell 1979, 294-5, Cat.Nr. 2; pl. 45.1-3; Kankeleit 1994, 6-8, Cat.Nr. 3.		

Cat.Nr.2 Korone

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Museum Kalamata
Date:	2nd century CE (Waywell), 4th century CE (Parlasca)		
Size:	3.13 x 3.13 m		
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The mosaic covers the floor of a large room with a circular pattern. The central panel depicts a drunken Dionysus, supported by a satyr. Many of the surrounding images illustrate Dionysiac themes, but four show armed venatores in the arena. One venator has struck down a bull that is bleeding, anoter is fighting a lion while, and a third is in combat with a tiger. The fourth image has been destroyed but, based on the overall composition it likely also illustrated a *venatio* scene.

Literature: Parlasca 1959, 116; Waywell 1979, 299, Cat.Nr. 30; pl. 49.27; Hellenkemper-Salies 1986, 271-2, n. 173; Kankeleit 1994, 120-2, Cat.Nr. 62.

Cat.Nr.3 Patras

Patras was one of the largest cities of the Peloponnese and the capital of the province Achaia. It gained prominence due to its harbors and is mentioned by various authors traveling to and from Italy.

Findspot:	House, room X14	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	n/A	Size:	1.40 x 0.96 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic depicts two named gladiators fighting against each other (right: Ga(ios?), left: Kallimorphos). The referee Timokrates is standing on the left side of the image and a small helper is also shown. The two gladiators are gripping each other tightly, which is a rather unusual stance for gladiators and is reminiscent of depictions of wrestlers. The mosaic is surrounded by large tendrils enclosing small armed figures that resemble gladiators. The actual fighting styles cannot be identified due to the damage to the mosaic.

Site: The house was not completely excavated and the function of room X14 is not identifiable.

Literature: Papapostolou 1987, 393-401, fig. 36-37; Kankeleit 1994, 250-3; Rizakēs 1998, 218, Cat.Nr. 173.

Cat.Nr.4 Philippi

Findspot:	public bath, room H	Current Location:	Museum Philippi
Date:	mid-3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The large mosaic floor is decorated with a variety of animal scenes: a lion and a leopard are tearing apart an animal, two wild boars are roaming around, a grey dog is barking at a deer, a wild cat is hunting down a wild goat, and a tiger is carrying the head of a donkey.

Site: The public baths and this mosaic were discovered in 1934. Very little has been published about this site.

Literature: Collart 1937, 366-7, Pl. LIV-LVI; Waywell 1979, 301-2, Cat.Nr. 41; pl. 50.37-38; Kankeleit 1994, 284-6, Cat.Nr. 175.

Africa Proconsularis

Cat.Nr.5 Carthage (colonia Iulia Karthago)

Findspot:	villa of the peacock	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	4th century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A venator (Bonifatius) and two bears (Crudelis and Omicida) is all that remain of this poorly preserved mosaic.

Site: The mosaic is very fragmentary. Excavations first took place in 1927 and in further excavations took place in 1934. Several mosaics were discovered in the villa, including the depiction of a *venatio* in the corridor. The villa was never completely excavated.

Literature: Poinssot and Quoniam 1952, 144-65; Dunbabin 1978, 73; Yacoub 1993; Ghedini and Bullo 2003, 136, Cat.Nr. 13; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, 20, Cat.Nr. 2, pl. 5-7.

Cat.Nr.6 Carthage (colonia Iulia Karthago) Fig. 1

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	mid to late 3rd century CE	Size:	8.20 x 3.34 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio,* gladiatorial combat

Description: 21 or 22 animals are depicted in this mosaic. They include: three pairs of leopards, two bears, two boars, two sheep, two ostriches, a bull, a deer, a buck, an antelope, and an addax (screwhorn antelope). The animals are shown in groups and some are in fighting position, however, they appear to represent animals at rest rather than animals in conflict. Numbers are inscribed on the bodies of the animals, and these have been interpreted as the number of animals that participated in various games. According to Dunbabin this mosaic is the earliest animal catalog mosaic.
The inscription, which has generally been interpreted as a comparison of privately vs. publicly financed games and possibly reads: MEL(IUS) QUAESTURA – “better than the questor's (games).”

Site: This mosaic was discovered in 1930 during construction work 300 m west of the amphitheater. The precise findspot is no longer known.

Literature: Poinssot and Quoniam 1952, 127-43; Dunbabin 1978, 71-2, 250, Nr. 3 (a), fig. 57; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, Cat.Nr. 5, pl. 6.

Cat.Nr.7 El Djem **Fig. 3; 16**

Findspot:	Sollertiana Domus	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	3 x 3.53 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	execution

Description: In the preserved corners of the mosaic two men are shown bound to stakes and at various stages of being mauled by wild cats or leopards. Spears on the ground indicate that the animals might have been hunted or chased first. At the center is a platform with trophies mounted on each corner. The image is set within an amphitheater and likely represents the punishment of criminals to the *damnatio ad bestias*.

Site: The villa was completely excavated in 1960/1 and is located on the outskirts of Thysdrus. This mosaic was located in a small apartment towards the back of the house. Part of this mosaic was destroyed when a late antique necropolis was constructedabove the house; this provides a *terminus ante quem* for the abandonment of the house in the late 3rd or early 4th century CE.

Literature: Dunbabin 1978, 66, 259, fig. 50-51; Dulière, Slim, and Alexander 1996, 1-29, fig. 1; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, 36-8, Cat.Nr. 47, pl. 69-72.

Cat.Nr.8 El Djem **Fig. 3; 17**

Findspot:	Sollertiana Domus	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	2.28 x 6.15 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The mosaic is dominated by a central *aedicula* that shows Diana surrounded by 19 different animals, all in motion. The animals represent those typically found in an amphitheater rather than a rustic hunting scene.

Site: This panel was placed at the entrance to the triclinium. The floor of the triclinium had the typical T-shape patterning and is the largest room of this large house.

Literature: Dunbabin 1978, 46, 259, fig. 20; Dulière, Slim, and Alexander 1996, 13-6; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, 14, Cat.Nr. 1, pl. 0-1.

Cat.Nr.9 El Djem

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	early 3rd century CE	Size:	1.40 x 1.25 m

Genre: mosaic Iconography: *venatio,* gladiatorial combat

Description: Five hunters are seated around a sigma-form table with insignia marking each of the figures as belonging to a specific *familia*. In front of the table are five sleeping bulls with an inscription (SILENTIU(M) DORMIANT TAURI) and marked with insignia matching those of the hunters at the table. Above the hunters is another inscription: (N)OS NUDI (F)IEMUS. BIBERE VENIMUS. LA(M) MULTU(M) LOQUIMINI. AVOCEMUR. NOS TRES TENEMUS.
Due to the presence of the insignia, the figures have been interpreted to be *venatores* of rival teams dining together, likely the day before the spectacle.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1954 500 m west of the ruins of the amphitheater. The architectural context of the image was not documented.

Literature: Salomonson 1960; Dunbabin 1978, 78-9, 261, fig. 69; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, 26-7, Cat.Nr. 33, pl. 7.

Cat.Nr.10 Leptis Magna **Fig. 18**

Findspot: villa Wadi Lebda Current Location: Museum of Leptis Magna
Date: 2nd century CE Size: n/A
Genre: mosaic Iconography: gladiatorial combat

Description: On the left an exhausted *secutor* is sitting beside the corpse of a *retiarius*. The weapons of both opponents are strewn across the ground. The helmet of the *secutor* is removed and his long blond curls and face are visible. The composition is impressive and unlike any other known image. Four other mosaic panels were discovered which depict a *venatio* with a stag (looks very European), a bear, and a boar, four hunters wrestling a bull, another gladiator lifting his shield above his head, and a scene of a circus race.

Site: The villa was discovered during a survey by H. Ziegert and M. Wendowski and then excavated 2000-4. The villa was part of a larger villa estate that produced olive oil and grain. It was built in the late first century BCE and rebuilt multiple times due to erosion until 400 CE. The mosaics were discovered in the *frigidarium*. Only the *venatio* and gladiator mosaics have been published. Images of the other mosaics are not available.

Literature: Merrony 2005; Wendowski and Ziegert 2005; Junkelmann 2008, 182.

Cat.Nr.11 Leptis Magna **Fig. 4**

Findspot: Silin, villa du taureau Current Location: in situ
Date: early 3rd century CE Size: 1.13 x 0.85 m
Genre: mosaic Iconography: gladiatorial combat

Description: This mosaic depicts a costumed prisoner being attacked by a bull. There is also a beast-handler present, prodding the bull to attack and enliven the scene. Two additional figures in the upper left corner have been interpreted as corpses. Picard understands the costumed prisoner to be one of the Parthian prisoners that Caracalla condemned to the amphitheater. An inscription on the ground of the arena reads: FILOSERAPIS COMP(OSUIT).

Site: The villa was excavated in 1974 and the mosaic was first published in 1980. It was discovered in room 14, a corner room located off of the large peristyle courtyard. Another mosaic with spectacle imagery was also discovered in the villa (a birds-eye-view circus mosaic) as well as wall painting of *venatio* scenes. The mosaic bears some similarity to the combat scene in a mosaic in Reims (Cat.Nr.46) as the figures are not dressed like common gladiators. The wall painting appears to be unpublished with the exception of photographs available online.

Literature: Salza Prina Ricotti 1970; Mahjub 1978, 1983; Picard 1985; Blázquez, López Monteagudo, and Neira Jiménez 1990; Hugoniot 2003, vol. 3, 36, Cat.Nr. 46, pl. 68; Sintès 2004, 80; Dolciotti 2010.

Cat.Nr.12 Radès

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: This poorly preserved mosaic illustrates a variety of animals with names inscribed on their bodies as well as numbers likely indicating the number of animals killed. The depicted bears are called: Gloriosus, Braciatus, Simplicius, Alecsandria, Fedra, Nilus, and (Crin)itus and the bull is inscribed with the number 16. Fragments of a hunter were also discovered along with a name inscription: Lusius Morinus.

Literature: Dunbabin 1978, 72, 267, fig. 58; La Regina 2001, 206; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, 22, Cat.Nr. 5, pl. 30.

Cat.Nr.13 Smirat **Fig. 19**

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Sousse Museum
Date:	mid-3rd century CE	Size:	4.2 x 2.2 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: Four venatores of the familia of the Telegenii are shown fighting against four leopards. All figures are named (Spittara, Bullarius, Hilarinus, and Mamertinus) as are the leopards (Victor, Crispinus, Romanus, and Luxurius). Diana (or possibly a victory figure) and Dionysos stand in the center. The

dominus Magerius appears beside Dionysos and his name is inscribed twice in the mosaic. A herald carries a platter with four sacks of gold with their worth indicated on the outside. Beside him is the following inscription: "PER CURONEM DICTUM: "DOMINI MEI; UT TELEGENI(I) PRO LEOPARDO, MERITUM HABEANT VESTRI FAVORIS, DONTE EIS DENARIOS QUINGENTO. " And the people holler "ADCLAMATUM EST: "EXEMPLO TUO MUNUS SIC DISCANT FUTURI! AUDIANT PRAETERITI! UNDE TALE? QUANDO TALE? EXEMPLO QUAESTORUM MUNUS EDES, DE RE TUA MUNUS EDES(I)STA DIES: "MAGERIUS DONAT. "HOC EST HABERE, HOC EST POSSE, HOC EST IA(M)! NOX EST IA(M)! MUNERE TUO SACCIS MISSOS!" Although the *venatores* only asked for 500 *denarii* per leopard, Magerius gave them 1000 *denarii*.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in a villa in 1966. The findspot has been described as a bath house or the villa.

Literature: Beschaouch 1966; Dunbabin 1978, 67-9, 268, Pl. 53.; Hanoune 2000; Hugoniot 2003, vol. 3, 23-4, Cat.Nr. 8; Bomgardner 2009.

Cat.Nr.14 Sousse

Findspot:	house of the ostriches	Current Location:	Sousse Museum
Date:	mid-3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: Four *venatores* are shown standing at the top of the image preparing to fight the animals frantically running around below them. From the top of the mosaic down into the T-bar 20 different animals are depicted in the form of an animal catalog, each shown above a depicted weapon. The weapons likely indicate that the animals were killed by venatores. The animals include: four deer, eight antelopes, four onagers, and four ostriches. An inscription of one of the other panels of the floor mosaic says the following: NEOTERIUS OCCIDIT.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in the *triclinium* of a house and the mosaic forms the T of the floor mosaic. The house was constructed in the late 2nd century CE, renovated in the mid-3rd century, and finally abandoned in the late 3rd century.

Literature: Dunbabin 1978, 60-4, 271, pl. 60-62; Yacoub 1995, fig. 140; Ghedini and Bullo 2003, 106-7.

Cat.Nr.15 Thelepte

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	mid/late 3rd century CE	Size:	n/A

Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A man is shown fighting a lion surrounded by spectators. Blood drips from the lion. At the left edge of the image traces of a second lion are visible. Although the spectators are shown as separate images with frames, they are clearly responding to the central image.

Literature: Dunbabin 1978, 69-70, 272, fig. 55; La Regina 2001, 206; Hugoniot 2003, Vol. 3, 18, Cat.Nr. 9, pl. 6.

Cat.Nr.16 Thuburbo Maius

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	4.15 x 6.05 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The composition consists of many small single-figured vignettes including Venus adjusting her sandals, various animals, musicians, venatores, and an armed man (gladiator?). The vignettes are surrounded by geometrical decor.

Literature: Dunbabin 1978, 274; Alexander and Ben Abed Ben Khader 1994, Cat.Nr. 413.

Cat.Nr.17 Thuburbo Maius

Findspot:	house of Neptune	Current Location:	Bardo Museum
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	5.05 x 5.07 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: This mosaic shows Diana hunting a stag surrounded by animals typical of the *munus*. The animals appear in 14 small vignettes: there are many different types of animals as well as an armed man (gladiator?) and a naked man. The image of Diana is placed in a square frame at the center of the mosaic and dominates the composition. Similar to the *tablinum* mosaic in the Sollertiana Domus (Cat.Nr.8), all animals are in motion.

Literature: Poinssot and Quoniam 1952, 130, n. 8; Dunbabin 1978, 274; Alexander and Ben Abed Ben Khader 1994, Cat.Nr. 415; Hugoniot 2003, vol. 3, 13, Cat.Nr. 9, Pl. 9.

Cat.Nr.18 Zliten **Fig. 5; 20**

Findspot:	villa of Dar Buc Amméra	Current Location:	Tripoli Museum
Date:	late 2nd/early 3rd century	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: A checker board field of alternating fish and geometric decor is surrounded by four friezes with depictions of spectacles. The cycle begins at the bottom

left and consists of the following elements: vertical (north side): herm, music band, *eques-eques, retiarius-secutor, thraex-murmillo, hoplomachus-murmillo, provocator-provocator*; upper horizontal band: executions (*ad bestias*) and animal hunts, right vertical band: herm and music band, *retiarius-secutor, essedarius-essedarius, thraex-murmillo, hoplomachus-murmillo, retiarius-secutor*, lower band: *venationes*.

Site: The villa was first discovered by the Italian military in 1913 and the excavations began in 1914. The focus of the excavations and subsequent publications were the mosaics. The archaeological context was very poorly documented and there is great controversy regarding the dating of this mosaic. That suggested by D. Parrish is the most convincing.

Literature: Aurigemma 1926; Ville 1965; Dunbabin 1978, 235-7, pl. 1, 46-49; Parrish 1985; Junkelmann 2008, 100, fig. 41

Asia

Cat.Nr.19 Cos **Fig. 21**

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	Istanbul Archaeological Museum
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	1.92 x 0.72 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: A frieze style depiction of gladiators surrounds a central panel with a depiction of Orpheus. The gladiators are all marked with inscriptions giving their names in Greek. The left mosaic panel features a possible palm branch on the left edge and a pairing of the *retiarius* Tydeus (marked as victorious by the inscription NEI(KE)) and the *secutor* Leukaspis. To the right of this pairing are the *provocatores* Paktolos (victor) and Nympheros as well as a referee. The panel on the right side of the Orpheus mosaic is partially destroyed and of the two gladiator pairs only the one on the right is still visible. It features the encounter between a *retiarius* (-eus) fighting against a *secutor* (Perseus).

Site: The mosaic was discovered during excavations in 1900 by R. Herzog to the east of the stadium. The exact findspot is unclear.

Literature: Herzog 1901; Kondoleon 1991, 109-10; Kankeleit 1994, 134-6, Cat.Nr. 68; Dunbabin 1999, 216; De Matteis 2004, 145-6, Cat.Nr. 70, pl. 85-86.

Cat.Nr.20 Cos **Fig. 22**

Findspot:	"Casa del Sileno"	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	early 3rd century CE	Size:	4.36 x 7.25 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic depicts two pairs of gladiators fighting against each other separated by a referee in the center. The group on the left is composed of two similarly dressed gladiators, two *provocatores*. The name of the gladiator on the right has been preserved as Aigialos while the name of the gladiator on the left has been destroyed. The second group on the right consists of a *retiarius* (Zephyros) and a *secutor* (Ylas). The other panels of the floor mosaic include a naked hunter killing a boar and a satyr along with a donkey and small trees

Site: The house appears to have been discovered and excavated in 1938 and is part of the quartiere del decumano. The mosaic was laid in the doorway to a small room in the north.

Literature: Kankeleit 1994, 144-6; Dunbabin 1999, 216, fig. 27; De Matteis 2004, 96-8, Cat.Nr. 27, pl. 33-4.

Cat.Nr.21 Cos

Findspot:	Casa Romana	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A lion is shown in mid-jump, coming from the left and moving towards the center of the image, and about to bite a goat. A leopard is moving from the right towards the center and attacking a deer.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in courtyard 15 of a very large villa. The villa was discovered during an archaeological excavation after the earthquake of 1933. It was not documented very well and was reconstructed in 1938-1940 obscuring the evidence of the archaeological remains. The house was likely first constructed in the 3rd/2nd century BCE and then reconstructed after the earthquake of 142 CE. Many finds from the villa were lost in the course of WWI and WWII.

Literature: Albertocchi 1997; De Matteis 2004, 99-100, Cat.Nr. 29, pl. 35.1; Albertocchi 2010.

Cat.Nr.22 Cos

Findspot:	quartiere del porto	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: This mosaic is very schematic and shows a *venator* fighting against a leopard that is jumping at the *venator*. Other fields of this mosaic also appear to contain images of *venatores* hunting wild animals.

Site: The mosaic has been heavily destroyed.
Literature: Kankeleit 1994, 135-6; De Matteis 2004, 106-7, Cat.Nr. 37, pl. 40.2-41.

Cat.Nr.23 Cos **Fig. 1**

Findspot:	east of old mosque	Current Location:	Castello del Gran Maestro
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	3.14 x 1.53 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A *venator* and a leopard are attacking each other and the *venator* is holding a lance pointed at the leopard.
Site: This mosaic is very similar to Cat.Nr.22 but the details are finer.
Literature: Kankeleit 1994, 138-9, Cat.Nr. 73; De Matteis 2004, 133, Cat.Nr. 61, pl. 74.

Cat.Nr.24 Cos

Findspot: Area delle Terme Occidentali		Current Location:	in situ
Date:	late 2nd/early 3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The mosaic includes scenes from the arena which frame three central mosaics in the form of a long frieze. The most prominent of the central mosaics is the judgment of Paris; the other mosaics are not as well preserved but include smaller compositions, such as Apollo with the nine muses. A total of 16 *venatores* and 18 animals, of great variety, are shown. Each *venator* faces a large animal, and all figures are named. .
Site: This is a very complex set of mosaics that is difficult to understand. The area was excavated from 1935 to 1940 by the Scuola Archeologica Italiana. The mosaic is located in a large room 13.80 x 6.55 m in size to the north of the west baths. The function of the room is unclear. In the south the room opens onto a courtyard decorated with mosaics that was probably a peristyle. The published photographs of the mosaic are very poor
Literature: Kondoleon 1991, 109-10, fig. 5; De Matteis 1993; Kankeleit 1994, 139-43; Kondoleon 1995, 282; Dunbabin 1999, 214, 6; De Matteis 2004, 33-53, Cat.Nr. 1, pl. 2-13.

Cat.Nr.25 Ephesos

Findspot:	Terrace House 2	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	mid-2nd century CE	Size:	2.40 x 2.85 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A lion with an orange mane, and a tail curving up over his back, stands over the severed head of a bull. The lion holds his right paw protectively between the horns of the bull located in the left corner of the image, and casts a short black shadow onto the ground. The image is surrounded by a geometric border.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in residential unit 3, room 17. It is not placed centrally in the room. The lion is looking towards the entrance of the room in the south. Scheibelreiter suggests that the room was designed to hold a *kline* along the east wall from where the seated person would have been able to directly look at the mosaic. She also suggests that the uneven placement of the lion within the square indicates that the square was laid out and the image placed inside the frame on site. The dating of the mosaic is very secure because a building sacrifice – an intentional votive placed under the pavement at the time of construction – was placed underneath the mosaic. The offering included well-known pottery providing a reliable *terminus ad quem*.

Literature: Scheibelreiter 2005, 2011, 136-7, 236-7, Cat.Nr. 30.5; Scheibelreiter-Gail 2014, 725.

Cat.Nr.26 Miletus **Fig. 23**

Findspot:	"Orpheusvilla"	Current Location:	Berlin, Pergamonmuseum
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	7.80 x 6.30 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The Orpheus mosaic is part of a T-floor mosaic-decoration. A depiction of Orpheus surrounded by animals is placed in the horizontal of the T, in the center of the room. In the bar of the T are nine wild animals and four figures that resemble venatores with lances but they also have wings. The animals include two hunting dogs, and two lions, a panther, and a tiger that are hunting a deer and an antelope or ibex as well as a bear. The scene might depict a *venatio* or at least is heavily influenced by *venatio* compositions.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in a room securely identified as a *triclinium* based on the T-shape floor mosaic. The remains were discovered in the early 20th century.

Literature: Scheibelreiter 2011, 316-8, Cat.Nr. 91, fig. 410.

Cat.Nr.27 Orthosia **Fig. 24**

Findspot:	villa in Orthosia	Current Location:	Aydin Museum
Date:	2nd/3rd century	Size:	20.00 x 3.50-4.00 m

Genre: mosaic Iconography: gladiatorial combat

Description: The five exhibited mosaic panels show two gladiatorial scenes, one rider, a lion, and a mountain goat. The entire scheme of the mosaic consists of four large main panels in the center surrounded by a multipart border. The large panels include: a depiction of Leda on the swan, a chariot about to drive over a bearded man lying on his back, a satyr and two nymphs, and a nereid on a triton. The panels are separated by a narrow frieze. One depicts an armed man on the left, holding a knife and round shield and being attacked by a bird with a long neck. Another similarly dressed figure is standing to the right with a bird slung over his shoulder and another bearded man is standing on the right side identified with a name inscription as Thourein(os). It is unclear whether this is a *venatio* as *venatores* are not usually armed with a shield and this would be the first *venatio* scene to involve birds. Another figural frieze separates the third from the fourth panel. In this frieze two gladiatorial pairs are fighting against each other with a bald and bearded man standing between them. His right arm is raised and in his left hand he is holding a thin staff identifying him as a referee. Above his head are three lines of inscription: "Thoureinos, the wool maker". A heavily armed gladiator, likely a *secutor*, with helmet, shield, leg protectors is ready to give the last blow with his sword. The opponent is on the ground with blood spurting from his buttocks, both his sword and trident are lying at his side. To the other side of the referee is the second pair of gladiators. Possibly a *murmillo* is fighting against a *thrax*. They are attacking each other but again the fighter on the right, the *thrax* is bleeding. A frieze runs along the entire east side of the mosaic with numerous animals and humans hunting.

Site: This floor mosaic was discovered during rescue excavations in 1994-5 and moved to the museum in Aydin. The architectural context of the image could not be determined during the rescue excavations but Scheibelreiter suggests that it belonged to a large private house.

Literature: Yener and Ölmez 1996 (1997); Scheibelreiter 2011, 327-30, Cat.Nr. 100, fig. 441-57.

Britannia

Cat.Nr.28 Bignor **Fig. 6; 25**

Findspot: villa Current Location: in situ

Date: 4th century CE Size: 4.30 x 0.69 m

Genre: mosaic Iconography: gladiatorial combat

Description: In a narrow rectangular band a gladiatorial scene featuring 12 cupids is depicted. The composition is framed by a three-strand guilloche. Nine cupids appear in the guise of gladiators (*secutores* and *retiarii*) and the other three, wearing white tunics, are probably referees (not *lanistae*- trainers as Neal writes). The scenes depict various stages of a fight, including the wounding of a *retiarius*.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1812/1813 in room 3. This room had an apse facing north and was furnished with a hypocaust heating system. Part of the mosaic collapsed into the hypocaust system. The mosaic was relaid in 1929. The room has been identified as a *triclinium* but Neal does not believe that this is correct because the fine mosaics would have been covered by the couches.

Literature: Frere et al. 1982; Scott 1991, 89; Junkelmann 2008, 183, fig. 317; Neal and Cosh 2009, 492-6.

Cat.Nr.29 Brading

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	mid- 4th century CE	Size:	3.34 x 2.92 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic has a square central medallion surrounded by rectangular fields on all four sides. The bust of a figure with long flowing hair is depicted in the medallion with a possible staff and has been interpreted as Bacchus. To the right is an odd depiction of a house with a "cock-headed man in a striped tunic". The figure has been identified with the gnostic deity Abraxas but other interpretations abound. Below Bacchus is a less well-preserved image that might depict a gladiatorial contest. A figure is standing armed with a trident and net and can be interpreted as a *retiarius*. Only a helmet remains of the opponent. It is unclear how this image corresponds to the entire mosaic composition but scholars seem to think that the entire mosaic shows scenes from the amphitheater and the hunt but the artists were not entirely successful in the rendering of the scenes.

Site: The mosaic was found in 1880/1, in room III of the villa and is commonly referred to as the Bacchus (or "Abraxas") pavement. The mosaic was lifted and relayed in 1982.

Literature: Neal and Cosh 2009, 264-8.

Cat.Nr.30 Cirencester

Findspot:	Insula XVII, Dyer Street	Current Location:	Corinium Museum

Date:	n/A	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*
Description:	This mosaic shows dogs in the typical hunting pose.		
Site:	The mosaic was discovered in 1849.		
Literature:	McWhirr 1986; Neal and Cosh 2002, 107.		

Cat.Nr.31 Colchester

Findspot:	building 51	Current Location:	Colchester Museum
Date:	late 1st century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat
Description:	This wall painting fragment shows a capitulating *thraex*. He is standing, wearing a crested helmet with a loin cloth and a protective garment on his right arm. The shield is on the ground and his left arm is raised.		
Site:	Multiple rectangular panels were discovered in a timber framed building. The other panels are not very well preserved. The excellent workmanship led Wilmott to suggest that the artist was continental because he used a figure type that is very well known across the empire. The image is earlier than many of the amphitheaters in Britain.		
Literature:	Ling 1981; Junkelmann 2008, 45, fig. 59; Wilmott 2008, 170-1.		

Cat.Nr.32 Eccles

Findspot:	villa, bath house	Current Location:	Fort Cumberland
Date:	early 2nd century CE	Size:	3.65 x 3.65 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat
Description:	This mosaic is heavily damaged and the reconstruction is based on the few tesserae found together. It has been reconstructed as two armed figures in combat. The preserved fragments give an impression of the armor of the figures which is very suggestive of gladiators. Only parts of the feet and legs have been preserved and it is not possible to identify the type of gladiator.		
Site:	The gladiator mosaic was discovered in 1965 and is one of the earliest mosaics of Great Britain. The mosaics were not found in-situ but appear to have been part of the first occupation phase and were then removed. The tesserae were found dumped in other rooms but their original location was reconstructed based on some finds in the bath-house.		
Literature:	Neal 1965; Neal 1981, Cat.Nr. 43; Neal and Cosh 2009, 369-73, Cat.Nr. 54.1.		

Cat.Nr.33 Verulamium

Findspot:	insula XXI	Current Location:	Verulamium Museum

Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	3.58 x 3.58 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A lion is holding the severed head of a stag and walking to the left. The head is dripping blood and the antlers of the animal are visible, demonstrating that the lion killed a large stag. The image composition closely resembles the mosaic from Ephesos, Cat.Nr.25.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1959 in a large courtyard house dating to 175-180 CE. The room (4) did not have hypocaust heating.

Literature: Niblett 2001; Niblett, Manning, and Saunders 2006; Neal and Cosh 2009, 341-4, Cat.Nr. 8.40.

Cyprus

Cat.Nr.34 Kourion

Findspot:	House of the Gladiators	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	late 3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: Two gladiatorial scenes were discovered in the house of the gladiators featuring name inscriptions that identify the gladiators. In the central panel two heavily armed gladiators face each other, separated by the referee Dareios. The gladiator on the left is the thraex Lytras and the gladiator on the right is the murmillo E(…). The second mosaic panel shows two gladiators facing each other, however, it has been suggested that they are simply practicing with dull weapons. The gladiator on the right is named Hellenikos and the one on the left Margareites.

Site: The house was discovered and excavated in 1967-1970. The house of the gladiators is an *atrium*-style house with a peristyle and surrounding porticoes functioning as the central axis of the house. The mosaics were discovered in the courtyard. Two panels are still preserved with two gladiators facing each other on each mosaic. It is generally thought that a third mosaic panel belonged to the ensemble but that it was destroyed in the earthquake.

Literature: Loulloupis 1971, 1986; Dunbabin 1999, 229; Daszewski 2001, 81-5; Junkelmann 2008, 191, fig. 326, 59.

Cat.Nr.35 Paphos **Fig. 7; 26**

Findspot:	House of Dionysus	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	late 2nd century	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: Multiple *venatio* scenes are shown on three of the four sides of the *porticus* surrounding the courtyard. The fourth side in the west has four mosaic panels with mythological themes. The hunt scenes include six hunters and 18 animals (10 different species) set in a landscape. The amphitheater is alluded to through the depiction of gates, the dress of the hunters, as well as the type of animals and consists of 11 separate hunting scenes.

Site: The House of Dionysus is one of the largest and most ornately decorated houses on Cyprus. It was discovered by chance in 1962 and excavated until 1974 by K. Nicolaou. The mosaics and the architecture have been dated based on the pottery evidence. Although the house was carefully excavated, its original stratigraphy was later disturbed and many questions remain concerning the perimeter of the house and its phases. It appears that the house was constructed on the remains of a Hellenistic house and then destroyed by an earthquake soon after the mosaics were completed. The house became a source of building material. To the annoyance of later scholars, the excavator did not mark room entrances on the plan of the house.

Literature: Nicolaou 1963, 1980; Daszewski 1989; Kondoleon 1991, 1995; Michaēlidēs 1999.

Dalmatia

Cat.Nr.36 Nin

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: Two panels are preserved from Nin. In the one two equites are depicted in this mosaic. The victor (Species) with six victories is ready to give the final blow, the defeated Martialis, a free gladiator with 4 victories is holding up his left hand, the "P" indicates that he was killed. The style of the second panel is quite different from the first and shows a *secutor* defeating a *retiarius* who is lying on the ground. The published photographs do not permit the reading of the faint inscription.

Site: There is very little information about the original findspot of these two mosaics and based on the stylistic differences it is unclear whether these images were discovered together.

Literature: Suić, Batović, and Belošević 1968, pl. XXII, fig. 3-4; Suić 1969; Junkelmann 2008, 181

Gallia Aquitania

Cat.Nr.37 Périgueux **Fig. 8**

Findspot: maison du terrain de Lestrade		Current Location:	n/A
Date:	n/A	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The best known image from this house features a *retiarius* with his back turned towards the viewer, a large guard on his left arm and shoulder, short loin cloth tied around his waist and directing a trident at his opponent's neck on the left. Above him are letters that might be reconstructed as "Marcus" or "Mascius". On the right hand side the white tunic of the referee is visible from about the knee down. Only a sword pointed at the stomach of the *retiarius* can be made out. A fragment of another gladiator is also preserved. It shows the torso of a gladiator, his left arm has a large guard and his upper body is naked. It is reminiscent of a *retiarius* but due to its fragmentary nature, a decisive identification is not possible. The small size of the fragments does not permit a reconstruction of the scene.

Site: Originally three panels of wall painting were preserved in the early 1910s and 1920s but only two are still preserved. Despite the identification of the findspot as a house, it appears to have been a public context.

Literature: Barbet 1999, 2008.

Cat.Nr.38 Périgueux **Fig. 9**

Findspot:	domus de Vésone	Current Location:	in situ: musée Vesunna
Date:	mid-2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: Gladiatorial combat and animal fight scenes were part of the decoration of the second phase of this house and likely covered the garden wall. The wall painting was found in a very fragmented state of preservation detached from the wall and was recontextualized on the basis of the large size of the figures depicted on the wall painting. The depiction is a large gladiatorial combat or *munus*. None of the figures are entirely preserved and only fragments of multiple figures remain. These fragments depict various parts of armor and clothing typical for gladiators. On another type of plaster scenes of a hunt were discovered. They show wild animals, such as a panther, bull, and bear, on a greenish background. The posture and type of animal clearly suggests a *venatio*.

Site: Excavations of this site began in 1959 but the large amounts of wall painting were ignored until A. Barbet began conserving and studying the pieces with her team in 1997. The pieces had been restored in the 1960s but the restorers used poor adhesives and filled in all graffiti. The excavations continued in 1999 and 2000 in preparation of the construction of the museum over the site. A first house was built in the mid-1st century CE and then renovated at the end of the 1st century. In the mid-2nd century the entire house was raised by about a meter resulting in the preservation of the paintings from the 1st century. The house was abandoned and the building materials robbed towards the end of the 3rd century. The gladiatorial images are from the second phase and were located along the garden wall. The wall painting of the 2nd phase is very fragmented. The large size of the house and the quality of the paintings has raised the question whether the house was a private or a publicly used house. The wall painting in the peristyle of the first phase has a lot of gladiatorial and animal hunt graffiti in both a written and drawn form.

Literature: Barbet 1999; Barbet, Girardy-Caillat, and Bost 2003; Barbet, Monier, and Bost 2004; Barbet, Dagand, and Bujard 2005; Barbet 2008, 228-30, fig. 355; Barbet, Dagand, and Bujard 2008.

Gallia Belgica

Cat.Nr.39 (Kaiser-)Augst **Fig. 10; 27-8**

Findspot:	insula 30	Current Location:	various locations
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	6.55 x 9.80 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic consists of six square panels placed around a central panel with a water-spewing calyx krater surrounded by sea creatures (2 fish, 2 dolphins). The square panels face outwards and require the viewer to walk around the room to view all the mosaics. One panel was destroyed by a hole and no record for this image. Image 1 features a fight between two *equites* dressed in *tunicae* and facing each other. The gladiator to the right is about to hit the other gladiator. There are some complications with the left gladiator who is holding both his shield and wielding a sword with his right hand. Panel 2 shows a fight between a *murmillo* on the left and a *hoplomachus* on the right. The *hoplomachus* was victorious while the *murmillo* is lying on the ground. Panel 3 is a classic combat between a *secutor* on the left and a *retiarius* on the right. The *secutor* is standing over the *retiarius* with his left arm stretched out while the *retiarius* is turned to the right with his back to

the *secutor* (death blow?). Panel 4 features a *murmillo* on the left who has won a fight against a *thraex*. The *thraex* is wounded and turning away from the *murmillo* who is ready to attack. In Panel 5 again a *secutor* and *retiarius* meet but this time they are equally paired and the outcome is not yet clear. The trident is lying on the ground. Both gladiators are stabbing each other in the leg/shoulder.

Site: The mosaic was broken into 15 parts and is currently housed in four locations in Augst. The mosaic was discovered in 1961 in the southern part of the insula 30 in a room without any heating installations that appears to be a formal room. In the early 1st century CE about 30 wood houses existed in insula 30 but by 100 CE there were only about 2-3 houses and by around 200 CE the entire insula belonged to one family. The house was probably a private house. Due to the prominence of the gladiatorial images as well as two finds (a stilet, and a Mars statue) it has been suggested that the house might have been used by a group of gladiators or was a meeting place for gladiators (Berger 2012, 71). The house was destroyed in the late 3rd century CE.

Literature: Berger and Joos 1971; Schmid 1993; Junkelmann 2008, 96-7, fig. 133-7; Hufschmid 2009; Berger and Hufschmid 2012, 51.

Cat.Nr.40 Mechern

Findspot: Saarbrücken	villa	Current Location:	Stadtmuseum
Date:	2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre: combat	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial

Description: Multiple preserved panels of wall painting include *venatio* and gladiatorial combat scenes, as well as random still life depictions of mushrooms, fish steaks, a rooster playing an instrument, and herds of deer. The scenes are all painted on a dark background and each panel is separated by narrower red panels. The panel depicting a hunt shows a tiger and another animal moving to the right. Their posture indicates that they are ready to attack but the rest of the image is not preserved. Four panels show different gladiatorial fights: the most well-known painting shows a *retiarius* and a *secutor* mid-fight. The gladiator on the left is wearing a helmet, loin cloth, shield and his legs are protected while he attacks with his spear. The *secutor* on the right is hiding behind his tall shield, wearing a helmet, and is holding his sword in his right hand. The next panel shows two light-armored gladiators fighting against

each other. The better preserved figure on the left is a *retiarius* with a net and trident. The gladiator on the right has also been identified as a *retiarius* but this is highly unusual and not convincing. A single figure is preserved of the last gladiatorial panel. The figure is small, holding a shield in his left and taking aim with his sword in his right hand. The figure is quite small and not athletic and this might be a depiction of an early warm-up fight of comic nature. The last scene is of two light-armored gladiators dressed in a belted *tunica* and pants. It is poorly preserved and not all the details are recognizable.

Site: The villa was excavated during construction activities of the local church in 1970. Well-preserved wall painting was discovered and removed from the walls. It underwent conservation and is now on display in the museum of Saarbrücken. The villa appears to have been quite extensive and was not a simple *villa rustica*. The excavated area also included rooms for bathing.

Literature: Schumacher 1992; Henz and Schumacher 1998; Junkelmann 2008, 105, fig. 45.

Cat.Nr.41 Metz

Findspot:	Place Coislin	Current Location:	Musée de la cour d'or
Date:	2nd/3rd century CE	Size:	0.90 x 2.34 m; 0.90 x 0.73 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: This ensemble consists of four square mosaic panels. Each panel depicts an armed gladiator with a name inscription. The first gladiator in the row is mid-stride, holding a lance in his right and a shield in his left. His clothing is unclear and all that remains of the name inscription is -DUS. The second panel shows a heavily clad and armored gladiator walking to the right with a short sword in his right hand. The figure is also holding a very long rectangular shield. His head is not preserved and all that remains of his name is M-. The third panel is the best preserved panel. It shows a lightly armored man, only dressed in a loin cloth with a heavy protective armor on his left arm and without a helmet. In his right outstretched hand he is holding a short sword and he is looking to the left, towards the second panel. The figure appears to be sitting on something but it is not clear what. His name is SEN-.IANUS. A fourth panel is separated from the other three and shows the top third of a heavily armored gladiator with helmet and full upper body and arm protection. He is turned to the right and his name begins with PR-.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1969 during construction work and the other panels were destroyed by a medieval tunnel and modern canals.

Literature: Morin 1970; Vigneron 1986, 96, fig. 11; Landes 1987, 101; Vismara and Caldelli 2000, 112, Cat.Nr. 71, pl. XXXIII 1-4; Flotté 2005, 111, fig. 68-69.

Cat.Nr.42 Metz

Findspot:	Pontiffroy	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	n/A	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: Based on the published descriptions it appears that one fragment shows a gladiator facing to the left ready to attack, clothed in a short tunic and protective gear holding either a trident or lance. The fragment also depicts a gladiator facing left but he is not very well preserved. He is also ready to attack and is holding an oval shield.

Site: The fragments are very poorly preserved and not very well published.

Literature: Schlemaire 1976, 53; Dumasy-Mathieu 1990b, 128.

Cat.Nr.43 Nennig **Fig. 1; 11-2; 29**

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	mid-3rd century CE	Size:	15.65 x 10.30 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: This figural mosaic is one of the finest mosaics discovered to date in Germany. The tesserae are very small and the images are intricate with extensive shading and color variation. The mosaic is rectangular and eight vignettes are framed by a geometric background. One vignette was damaged and its imagery is no longer known, instead the gap is filled by a plaque describing when the mosaic was discovered (1852), recovered (1874) and restored (1960). Six octagonal vignettes are arranged around the border of the mosaic and a large square vignette and another octagonal vignette are located in the center. The images describe various events that took place over the course of a day at a *munus*. Images along the long side include: a lion with his trainer and the head of an ass, a bleeding leopard with two lances stuck in his back and the victorious venator with his right arm raised. On the opposite side are the following images: two men, one fully clothed and the other with pants, whipping each other. They have small shields covering their left hand and short rods in their left hand. These have been suggested to be *paegniarius*, fighters who are not actual gladiators but possibly were involved in training animals. Their clothing is similar to that of the trainer with the panther. The second image on this side involves a female tiger with full teats attacking and wounding a donkey who is cowering down

on his front legs. Along the short side is an image of a man playing a water organ and a man holding a trumpet on his shoulder. Above this image is a large square image. Its size and prominent placement in the center marks it as the most important image of the mosaic. Two gladiators fighting against each other are depicted with a referee standing in the middle. A *retiarius* is on the left, armed with a trident and dressed with a cloak around his waist and a protective covering on his left hand. On the right is a *secutor* with a heavy helmet and shield, his sword is not visible and his left leg and right arm are heavily padded. The referee is in motion, wearing a toga and holding a thin rod. Above this scene is another smaller octagonal image with three trainers holding whips of which one is on the ground with a bear on top of him. Their clothing is similar to that of the other animal trainer and the *paegniarii* with a small shield/padding on their left arm.

Site: The entrance to the room was located where the octagon with the modern inscription is located and the wide geometric strip along the other end of the room indicates that the wide dinner couches were probably set up her. The dating of the mosaic is based on Salies' research on the geometric patterns of Roman mosaics and he identifies the lozenge shapes as typical of the mid-3rd century. A coin of Commodus (180-192 CE) was discovered in the backing of the mosaic. The villa is very large and recent excavations have shed more light on the agricultural production of the villa. Its location along the Moselle River was likely beneficial to the patron.

Literature: Parlasca 1959, 35-7, pl. 6-9; Salies 1974, 174, Nr. 338; Lichardus and Bertemes 1992; Echt 2003; Meynersen 2012.

Cat.Nr.44 Nizy-le-Comte*

Findspot:	Gallo-Roman temple	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	2nd century	Size:	11 x 1.50 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	hunting

Description: The large-scale paintings depict various stages of an animal hunt. Many figures are engaged in the hunt that includes nets and other gadgets. Although this painting is often discussed as a spectacle scene, it has been argued that this is not related to the amphitheater but instead depicts parts of the Labors of Hercules, such as the hind of Cerynia and the fight with the *hydra*. Barbet has suggested that this might also be a *venatio* scene. Although the animals depicted include lions, the clothing of the figures does not resemble the clothing of regular venatores and the figures are draped in heavy cloaks. Rather than a *venatio* it might also simply be the catching of

wild animals for a *venatio* or for the entertainment of a rich land owner. Its discovery on the *porticus* wall of a temple is curious.

Site: The paintings were discovered during excavations in 1851 to 1854 and were inadequately restored. The paintings were incorporated into a wall of the old library of Laon. In order to study and preserve them correctly, they were removed. In the 1980's A. Barbet and her team properly treated the wall paintings. Watercolors from the 19th century also survive, allowing for comparisons between the original and the current condition of the wall painting. The building is a large peristyle courtyard (70 m x 70 m) with elaborate bases and columns. The paintings were found along the south wall of the peristyle, preserved face-down on the ground. The archaeological context of the images has been identified as a Gallo-Roman temple. The building has been dated based on the style of the wall painting due to a lack of other finds.

Literature: Barbet 1987, 2008, 287-9, fig. 445-7; Moormann 2011, 104-10.

Cat.Nr.45 Reims

Findspot:	rue Perseval	Current Location:	Musée Saint Rémis
Date:	2nd century CE	Size:	5.30 x 3.80 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic features two naked men fighting with sword and shield on a white background.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1890 but very little is known about the archaeological context.

Literature: Loriquet 1862; Stern 1957, 30-1, Cat.Nr. 29; Darmon 1990, 147-9.

Cat.Nr.46 Reims

Findspot:	square Colbert	Current Location:	Musée Saint-Rémi
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	10.85 x 8.60 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: A large rectangular mosaic is divided into 35 panels with single scenes of various types of gladiators ready for combat and in action poses. It also includes venatores and animals. Each panel is surrounded by an intricately twisted guilloche. It is unclear whether each fighter/animal is fighting with the animal/fighter in the neighboring panel or not. An ornamental border surrounds the entire mosaic. The many different figures resemble a catalog of possible fighters and animals.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1860 and later destroyed in World War I with the exception of one panel now on exhibit in Reims.

Literature: Stern 1957, 33-5.

Cat.Nr.47 Trier

Findspot: Antoniusbrunnen Trier — Current Location: Rheinisches Landesmuseum

Date: mid-3rd century CE — Size: 3.86 x 1.39 m

Genre: mosaic — Iconography: *venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: Originally, the mosaic featured an octagonal panel in the middle of the floor showing two gladiators in combat. This part is destroyed but sketches in Skb.37 indicate that they were fighters with round shield and helmets decorated with two feathers. A panel from the edge of the mosaic has been preserved. It is semicircular in shape and depicts a lion fighting with a bull which is also likely a depiction from the arena. The image greatly resembles the lion depiction from Ephesos (Cat.Nr.25).

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1899 in front of the house Karl-Marx-Str. 3. It was lifted in 3 fragments, restored, and fitted together in 1907. The documented part of the mosaic comes from the north corner of a fairly large room. Parts of the northeast and northwest wall were excavated to a length of 4m. In the corner the room had hypocausts.

Literature: Parlasca 1959, 22-3, pl. 5.1; Hoffmann, Hupe, and Goethert 1999, 117-8, Cat.Nr. 68, pl. 33.

Gallia Lugdunensis

Cat.Nr.48 Croisille-sur-Briance

Findspot: villa du Liégeaud Limoges — Current Location: Musée des beaux-arts,

Date: mid-2nd century CE — Size: 0.45 x 0.20 m

Genre: wall painting — Iconography: *venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: The wall painting of the villa consists of two zones. Zone 1 is characterized by animals and vegetal motifs, while zone 2 has many figures engaged in gladiatorial combat, chariot racing, and other forms of Roman entertainment. The figures are either on a plinth measuring 30-40 cm in height or part of the entablature with small figures (15-18 cm). The plinth is a white strip with an inscription in black letters which is incomplete but includes the term SPECTACULA and the words "SIGNO DATO VIX... " referring to the donation of games. Five pairs of gladiators are reconstructed. In the

entablature above the register are hunt scenes in an amphitheater that alternate with chariot scenes. Dumasy (1991, 128-9) argues that the inscriptions were not there to explain the depictions but instead to make them more personal and identify the images as actual events and not simple references to spectacle in general.

Site: The villa was discovered in the course of agricultural work in 1913 and parts of the villa were exposed through illegal excavations in the 1960s. In 1974 official excavations took place. The wall painting had been systematically destroyed and dumped in antiquity. It was carefully excavated and immediately treated by conservators. Some of the scenes have been pieced together and also some pieces of inscriptions have been discovered. The discovered painting is very fragmentary and 75% is estimated to have been lost. Three main phases have been identified: the villa was likely built around 150 CE (dated based on the wall painting and an amphora fragment) and consisted of a main building and a second detached house. The villa was renovated in the late 2nd century. The villa was destroyed in the third quarter of the 3rd century. The villa is not as richly furnished as many of the other villas in the area since marble is lacking and no columns or other "Roman" architectural elements are included in the house.

Literature: Dumasy 1983; Dumasy-Mathieu 1990b, 1990a, 1991; Barbet 2008, 231-4, fig. 359-60.

Cat.Nr.49 Flacé-lès-Mâcon

Findspot:	au grand-four	Current Location: Musée des Ursulines à Mâcon	
Date:	2nd/3rd century CE	Size:	1.40 x 1.40 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: A single heavily armed gladiator (possibly a *murmillo*) is standing with his weight shifted to the right. He appears to be preparing for an attack. He is wearing a helmet, shield, and his right arm with his sword is protected. He is wearing a loin cloth and high boots. To the right of the image set back slightly is a pole that is often used during training. It is not clear whether this gladiator is training or actually fighting. It is similar to the panels from Reims (Cat.Nr.46)

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1893 and the original context is not known. Five additional fragments have also been preserved but the theme of the other fragments is not clear.

Literature: Stern and Blanchard-Lemée 1975, 114-6, Cat.Nr. 308.

Cat.Nr.50 Lyon

Findspot:	Montée du Télégraphe	Current Location:	Musée des beaux-arts
Date:	early 3rd century CE	Size:	5 x 4.75 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio,* gladiatorial combat

Description: This mosaic shows animals running in a circle chasing each other, including an elephant, a bear, a bull, a dog. A figure is in a box in the center holding a branch in his hand.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1912 but its current location is not exactly known. It is possibly being restored at the moment. The mosaic is not very well preserved and the figures are of a rather schematic nature.

Literature: Stern 1967, 35-6, Cat.Nr. 25.

Gallia Narbonensis

Cat.Nr.51 Aix-en-Provence **Fig. 30**

Findspot:	rue de la molle	Current Location:	Musée Granet
Date:	1st century CE	Size:	0.89 x 0.60 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The gladiator is turned slightly to the right and holding a trident which identifies him as a *retiarius*. His skin is of dark-color and an inscription is located above his head: BERYLLV(S). Two additional letters were discovered: NV which can possibly be reconstructed to INVICTVS (?).

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1993. It was found as part of a reconnaissance trench in search of parts of the theater Nô by the école des beaux-arts. Very little is known about the context of the find.

Literature: Lavagne 1994; Guyon 1998, 53-4, Cat.Nr. 20; Lavagne 2000, 218-20, Cat.Nr. 748.

Cat.Nr.52 Vienne*

Findspot:	Maison des athlètes	Current Location:	Musée lapidaire
Date:	late 2nd/early 3rd century CE	Size:	9.07 x 6.70 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	athletes

Description: This mosaic is composed of eight octagonal panels with depictions of athletes or gladiators. In the corners are heads of the four seasons. This mosaic likely depicts athletes instead of gladiators but it is often mentioned in the context of gladiatorial imagery.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1966.

Literature: Lancha 1981, 58-70, Cat.Nr. 264.

Germania Inferior

Cat.Nr.53 Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler*

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	2nd/3rd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The frieze in the upper part of the wall painting is decorated with vases separated by groups of gladiators and sea creatures. The lower half of two chariots was also discovered. After viewing the original wall painting and the published evidence for the interpretation of the very fragmentary remains, the interpretation of the fragments as gladiatorial combat is not convincing.

Site: The villa was excavated from 1979 to 1992. The excavations revealed some of the largest amounts of Roman wall painting in modern-day Germany. Wall painting was discovered in the main house (house II) as well as an earlier house (=house I) from the 1st century CE.

Literature: Gogräfe 1991, 1995, 1999, 132-7, 251-8, fig. 97.

Cat.Nr.54 Cologne*

Findspot:	Lungengasse	Current Location:	Römisch-Germanisches Museum
Date:	early 4th century CE	Size:	2.83 x 2.68 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic shows parts of four gladiators along with an inscription (CAVEA; ROSSV ADVENTUS). Spectators are depicted above the scene.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1885 but nothing is known about its find context. The mosaic is also heavily restored and large parts appear to be 19th century additions.

Literature: Parlasca 1959, 82-4; Boeselager 1987; Thomas and Heck 2008 (2009).

Cat.Nr.55 Cologne

Findspot:	Domviertel, Insula H/1	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	late 2nd/early 3rd century CE	Size:	1.64 x 2.42 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: This is a megalographic painting with two topics: a horse is being attacked by a tiger and has thrown off its rider. The second image shows a panther sneaking around. The imagery must have filled the entire room and was likely not limited to a small field. Schleiermacher has concluded that there are no comparable images to the tiger-horse-rider image.

Site: The wall painting fragments were found in a room of a Roman house. Further details have not yet been published.

Literature: Schleiermacher 1982; Schleiermacher 1983; Thomas 1993

Cat.Nr.56 Maasbracht

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: The wall paintings include three groups of figural scenes. The first group of fragments is very poorly preserved and depicts myths. It is painted as framed panels on a white background and set between columns. Painted inscriptions were discovered alongside this group of fragments but it has not yet been read. The next group consists of single life-size figures on a black background. Based on comparisons, it has been suggested that these figures represent gladiators or *venatores*. Fragments that appear to represent panther skin indicate that these were depictions of *venationes*. The third set of images consists of standing figures clothed in either purple tunics or tunics with purple *clavi*. One figure in a purple tunic is holding a purse. Other fragments show a figure with a writing tablet and a *stilus*.

Site: The villa was built around 100 CE. It was largely rebuilt and extended at the end of the 2nd century and probably abandoned in the late 3rd century. A bath house was identified in the immediate vicinity of the villa but not excavated. Many of the rooms had floor heating. The villa was dismantled in the 7th or 8th century when the stones of the building were robbed. The wall painting was discovered during excavations in 1982 in the debris of the villa. The painting appears to come from the main room of the building and was of very high quality.

Literature: Swinkels 1987; van Dierendonck, Swinkels, and Willems 1988.

Germania Superior

Cat.Nr.57 Bad Kreuznach **Fig. 1; 13; 31**

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Römerhalle
Date:	3rd century CE	Size:	7.40 x 6.72 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic consists of two parts: the elaborate figural composition and then a decorative area in the annex/niche. At the center of the mosaic is a round hunting scene that was partially destroyed and is now presented with a modern reconstruction. Eight panels of equal size surround the central mosaic with alternating depictions of gladiatorial combat and animal *venationes* (killing a wild boar, a leopard, a bull, and a bear). In each corner is

a small square depiction of a wild animal attacking a weaker animal, such as a lion holding the head of a bull, a female tiger overpowering a horse, a bear attacking a deer, and a wild boar fighting against a leopard. The four gladiatorial depictions feature a *retiarius* and *secutor* in an even match (in front of the niche), to the right a small *hoplomachus* against a gigantic *murmillo*, two *equites* against each other and a *thraex* against a *murmillo*.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1893/94 and was then purchased by the city Bad Kreuznach in 1904. The image was restored in 1954 following extensive damage in the course of WW2 including both fire and water damage. It was discovered in the southwest corner of the villa in room 1. This is a large room with a niche 3.80 x 2.35 m in size. It is suggested that this room was of a more private nature.

Literature: Geib and Guthmann 1910; Parlasca 1959, 88-9; Guthmann 1966, 1969; Rabold 1995; Gogräfe 1997; Ehmig 2005; Hornung and Nestler-Zapp 2008, 39-46; Junkelmann 2008, 99, fig. 140.

Cat.Nr.58 Bad Kreuznach

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Römerhalle
Date:	mid-2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: An earlier phase of the villa includes fragments of hunting scenes. Fragments of depictions of dog snouts were found that would have been affixed in the bottom part of a wall. In room 47 fragments of a panther and possibly a lion depiction were discovered and in room 30a a fragment of a wall painting with a large-scale figural depiction. The figure was interpreted as a *secutor* fighting against a *retirarius*.

Site: The wall painting is of high quality and appears to come from two phases, including the first phase which was the construction phase (mid-2nd century).

Literature: Gogräfe 1997, 1999, 239-51, Cat.Nr. 32; Hornung and Nestler-Zapp 2008, 61-8.

Cat.Nr.59 Echternach

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	museum of Echternach
Date:	n/A	Size:	0.27 x 0.20 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: This wall painting consists of four small fragments with the depiction of a referee and a gladiator (*secutor*). The *lanista* is wearing a white *tunica*.

Site: The villa was very well excavated in the course of rescue excavations starting in 1975. The wall painting was not discovered in situ thus it is not possible to reconstruct its original context. The villa has five building phases. It was partially excavated in the 19th century due to agricultural issues: the farmers couldn't work their fields correctly. One farmer had all the Roman walls excavated, documented, and then removed.

Literature: Metzler et al. 1981.

Cat.Nr.60 Meikirch

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The wall painting is divided into a dado with color spots and architectural elements. Scenes with figures are demarcated by frames and set above the dado. Inscriptions in Celtic and Latin identify the scenes more closely but the poor state of preservation makes the identification of the inscriptions and scenes very difficult. Frame 1 shows a man standing with a short tunic. He is not preserved from his waist upward. Frame 2: walking horses. Frame 3: jumping dog. Frame 4: lion jumping out of a barrel. Frame 5: parade horse and banner; incl. controversial inscription. Frame 6: bull with inscription that has been interpreted as a *venatio* scene. Frame 7: man in front of building and water. Frame 8: man in green standing in front of three herms. Frame 9: goat in tub with the inscription "this is Capratina/the little goat". Frame 11: tree branches with apples hanging from the branches. Frame 13: birds on birdbath. Frame 15 and 16: hooves and bush. Frame 17: animal and runner. The style is very simple.

Site: The villa was excavated in 1977 in the course of renovating the church of Meikirch and additional information was gained through excavations in a neighboring house. The wall painting was discovered in room 15, the *cryptoporticus* of the villa.

Literature: Drack 1986, 46; Suter and André 2004.

Cat.Nr.61 Vallon

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Musée Romain Vallon
Date:	early 3rd century CE	Size:	8.90 x 8.80 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The mosaic consists of 10 hexagons filled with figures of *venatores* and animals and surrounded by complex geometric decor. The individual

hexagons have been joined together and linked scenes have been identified. Contrary to the main publication on the mosaic, the figures are *venatores*, not gladiators.

Site: The site was identified in 1970 and archaeological excavations first began in 1981-82 and were carried out until 1992. The house excavated to date has an "L"-shape of 60 x 90m. Three main building phases have been identified. It was first constructed in the mid-1st century and renovated in the 3rd century. The *venatio*-mosaic was installed in the first half of the 3rd century in a room identified as a *triclinium* while another mosaic had already been laid in the second half of the 2nd century.

Literature: Gardiol 1990; Gardiol, Rebetez, and Saby 1990; Fuchs 1992; Saby 2001; Agustoni and Wolf 2005.

Cat.Nr.62 Yvonand-Mordagne

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	early 2nd century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The wall is divided into three parts: the bottom and top panels are decorated with imitation marble while figures, such as *venatores* and animals, are shown in the center. The rectangular panels are separated by frames imitating architecture (columns, pedestals, etc.). Each *venator* is dressed differently and some are in action while others are standing still. All hold spears of some form.

Site: The villa has been documented since the 18th century and many spectacular finds were made in the 19th and 20th century, however, the scientific study of the villa did not begin until the 1980s and actual excavations in 1990 and 1991. The paintings decorated a porticus of the *pars urbana* 48-64 m in length. The villa was constructed in the early 1st century CE and the wall painting has been dated on stylistic grounds to 25-45 CE.

Literature: Dubois 1996, 1999; Dubois, Paratte, and Ebbutt 2003.

Hispania Lusitania

Cat.Nr.63 Mérida

Findspot:	amphitheater	Current Location:	Museo Nacional de Arte Romano
Date:	late 1st century CE	Size:	0.75 x 0.25 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The paintings show various stages of a *venatio*. The best preserved parts include lions and tigers. One fragment shows a tiger attacking a fleeing donkey, and another shows a lion attacking a *venator* holding a spear.

Site: The painted decoration of the amphitheater was discovered during excavations in 1979. The decoration was attributed to the amphitheater based on the size of the blocks. According to the reconstruction of Alvarez Martínez the images were affixed on the top of the wall surrounding the arena.

Literature: Alvarez Martínez 1994; Alvarez Martínez and Enríquez Navascués 1994.

Hispania Tarraconensis

Cat.Nr.64 Estada*

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Zaragoza Museum
Date:	5th century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	Aeneid

Description: Blázquez identifies this mosaic as a gladiatorial image with two gladiators, however, the inscription around the left side and top of the mosaic has been attributed to Vergil's Aeneid and describes the fall of Troy. Blázquez' identification as a gladiatorial image is not correct and instead this image appears to be a depiction of the fall of Troy, as also argued by Gómez Pallarès.

Site: The mosaic was found in a villa excavated by Estada but no reports have been published to date.

Literature: Gómez Pallarès 2001; Blázquez Martínez 2002, 74.

Cat.Nr.65 Puigvert de Agramunt

Findspot:	villa romana de El Reguer	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	mid-3rd century CE	Size:	7.50 x 7.50 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The *venator* is simply standing in a corner holding a lance in his hand but not moving. Blázquez suggests that this figure could also be a wrestler, however, a wrestler with a lance is dubious. The next image shows a wild boar.

Site: In the villa in El Reguer three mosaics were discovered of which the *venatio*-mosaic is the most famous. Blázquez compares the *venator* of the mosaic with the *venator* of the Smirat mosaic, dating to the mid-3rd century CE. The mosaic was discovered in room A.

Literature: Batista Noguera 1962; Mercé and Coronel 1962; Blázquez 1989, 21; López Monteagudo 1991, 255-9.

Cat.Nr.66 Rielves

Findspot:	bath building	Current Location:	lost
Date:	3rd/4th century	Size:	n/A
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: Four warriors are facing each other. This image has been described as gladiatorial. However, their clothing and appearance resembles that of soldiers rather than that of gladiators or *venatores*.

Site: The mosaic was discovered in 1788 in a bath building. The original was lost and only a watercolor painting survives.

Literature: Blázquez 1982, 61-75, fig. 42, pl. 50.

Italia

Cat.Nr.67 Civitavecchia

Findspot:	n/A	Current Location:	private collection
Date:	2nd century CE	Size:	ca. 0.33 x 0.28 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: A dead man is lying on his back with an expressionless face. The torso is cut off from the rest of the body. The paw of a lion is visible in the upper part of the image and indicates that it is possibly a *venatio* scene.

Site: The mosaic was published on the basis of photographs and was possibly found in 1979 in a private house in the quarter of the casa Popolari in Civitavecchia.

Literature: Quilici 1982.

Cat.Nr.68 Piazza Armerina **Fig. 14; 32**

Findspot:	villa del Casale	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	4th century CE	Size:	59.63 x 5.00 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*, capture of animals

Description: The large mosaic depicts the capture of many different kinds of wild animals, such as a bull, an elephant, a hippopotamus, a rhinoceros, tigers, leopards, horses, goats, ostriches, etc. Figures on horseback or on foot carry spears and swords and herd the animals into nets and boxes. The capture of animals is taking place on either end of the mosaic. Other parts of the mosaic include wild cats chasing animals and men hunting animals. In the center of the mosaic men are loading boats with animals on one side while unloading them on the other.

Site: The mosaics were excavated in the 1950s soon after their discovery. Their full publication did not appear until 1982 but a lot of the archaeological

context is no longer preserved and was poorly documented. Later excavations provided a date for the main construction of the villa which was probably somewhere around 320 CE. It is no longer thought that this villa was owned by an emperor and instead it was likely the country seat of a very rich Roman family. The mosaics include scenes of the capture of animals, the *venatio* (such as the Great Hunt, room 36), circus races, etc.

Literature: Wilson 1983; Dunbabin 1999, 132-42; Muth 1999; Baum-vom Felde 2001; Wilson 2011.

Cat.Nr.69 Pompeii

Findspot:	Burial of C. Vestorius Priscus	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	mid-1st century CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: On a red background two gladiators are facing each other. The *murmillo* (some identify him as a *hoplomachus*) on the right is sitting on the ground defeated and the *thraex* is standing to the left holding a small knife. Both gladiators are wearing thin, see-through garments of white color. On the other side of the tomb is a depiction of large cats chasing animals.

Site: The tomb was discovered between 1907 and 1910 along with three other grave monuments to the north of the Vesuvian Gate. According to the inscription, the *aedile* died at 22 and his mother had the tomb built for him shortly before the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 CE. The gladiatorial scene is depicted on the left side of the tomb. It has been suggested that these paintings are reminiscent of the games that Priscus organized as *aedile*.

Literature: Mols and Moormann 1993-94; Jacobelli 2003, 92-4; Junkelmann 2008, 191, fig. 327.

Cat.Nr.70 Pompeii **Fig. 15**

Findspot:	house of Actius Anicetus	Current Location:	Museo Archeologico Nazionale
Date:	late 1st century BCE	Size:	1.70 x 1.85 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: This painting depicts the fight between the Pompeians and the Nucerians in 59 CE. The amphitheater closely resembles the amphitheater of Pompeii and two market stands are set up in front while to the right and left of the amphitheater groups of people are hitting each other and some are lying on the ground. Five people are also in the arena of the amphitheater but it is unclear whether they are gladiators or fighting spectators. In the seats of the

amphitheater the spectators have clustered and appear to be fighting. The arena wall might be imitating marble. In addition to this well-known painting, two depictions of gladiators were also discovered flanking the amphitheater scene on either side. The gladiators are no longer preserved and only watercolors exist.

Site: This well-known fresco was discovered on the west wall of the peristyle of the house of Actius Anicetus in 1868. It covered another painting with a gladiatorial topic, according to the descriptions made during the excavation. No evidence of this older painting remains today. The house has been identified through an inscription painted beside the entrance ("ANICE(TE) FAC"). Some scholars have suggested that a gladiator lived in this house. The image itself is highly unusual.

Literature: Fröhlich 1991, 2413247, pl. 23.2; La Regina 2001, 333, Cat.Nr. 23; Clarke 2003, 152-8; Jacobelli 2003, 71-3.

Cat.Nr.71 Pompeii

Findspot:	amphitheater, arena wall	Current Location:	lost
Date:	69 CE	Size:	n/A
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: The paintings included small and large panels. Shields, candelabras, etc. were depicted on the small panels and gladiatorial and animal fight scenes were shown in the large panels. In one image a gladiator is standing in front of a referee with an attendant holding up a helmet and another man is playing the tuba. The scene is flanked on either side by a victory. Although Jacobelli interprets this scene as a competition between the gladiators, it might be more likely that this is a depiction of honoring the victor. In the other scenes a bull and bear are tied to each other and are fighting, in another a lion is charging a deer.

Site: The arena wall was painted with scenes related to gladiatorial and animal combat and it was still visible in 1815 during the excavation of the amphitheater. However, the plaster crumbled in 1816 through frost and water color paintings of the original are all that remain.

Literature: La Regina 2001, 334-7; Jacobelli 2003, 58-62.

Cat.Nr.72 Rome

Findspot:	Clivus Victoriae	Current Location:	n/A
Date:	early 3rd century CE	Size:	9.00 x 5.80 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The composition of this mosaic is hard to understand due to its fragmented state of preservation. Heads, feet, and bodies of *venatores* are recognizable based on their clothing and weapons and various parts of animals commonly found on *venatio*-mosaics are also identifiable.

Site: It is not known when the mosaic was discovered. 13 fragments of the original mosaic are preserved.

Literature: Morricone 1967, 94-6, Cat.Nr. 86, pl. 20

Cat.Nr.73 Rome

Findspot:	Palatine, domus Tiberiana	Current Location:	in situ
Date:	mid/late 1st century CE	Size:	ca. 2.25 x 2.00 m
Genre:	wall painting	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: Three named figures are painted on the wall and are standing ready for action. The men are muscular and appear athletic and ready to fight. The man on the far left is shown in profile and is not very well preserved. Based on his weapons, he can be identified as a *thraex*. The man in the middle is wearing a *subligaculum*, a garment typical of gladiators. He is also wearing a *manica* on his right arm and is heavily armed. The third figure on the far right is particularly interesting because he is well preserved. The man is similar to the second figure. He is standing as if about to walk away. Above his head is a name *dipinto*: "AN IANVARIVS". The last figure has been suggested to be a referee because he is not wearing a helmet or weapons.

Site: The painting was discovered between 1985 and 1987 in a room that can be securely identified as a latrine with multiple seats. The vault, walls, and a later partition are still preserved. The figures are about 1.10 m tall.

Literature: Tomei and Conti 1991.

Cat.Nr.74 Rome

Findspot:	Via Appia	Current Location:	Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid
Date:	3rd century CE	Size:	0.58 x 0.58 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	gladiatorial combat

Description: The first panel shows the same fight in two stages and is divided in half by a horizontal line. On the bottom the *retiarius* Astyanax and the *secutor* Kalendio are equally paired with two referees on either side, while on the top, Kalendio is on the ground. An inscription above the reads: ASTYANAX VICIT KALENDIO. The second panel shows the fight between the *murmillones* Simmachius and Maternus. In the lower part of the panel the two gladiators face each other fully armed with helmets and equally matched again with a

referee on either side. In the upper image Maternus is lying on the ground in what appears to be a pool of blood and Symmachus is bending over him. They no longer are wearing their helmets and their shields are hanging in midair. Here the inscription is longer and both referees are named: -neco on the left and Habilis on the right. Another inscription is located between the two contestants: HAEC VIDEMUS; and then on the right is: SIMMACHI HOMO FELIX: In the lower half of the mosaic is another inscription: QUIVBUS PUGNATIBUS SIMMACHIUS FERRUM MISIT – and while these were fighting Symmachius thrust the sword.

Site: Two panels depicting gladiatorial combat are described as coming from the Orto dell Carciofolo along the via Appia. The mosaics were discovered in 1670 and have had a complex history since their discovery.

Literature: Blake 1940, 112-3; Versluys 2000; Nogales Basarrate 2002, 261-2, Cat.Nr. 80-81.

Cat.Nr.75 Tusculum **Fig. 1**

Findspot:	villa	Current Location:	Museo della villa Borghese
Date:	early 4th century CE	Size:	5.50 x 2.20 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: This mosaic consists of three panels showing gladiatorial combats and two panels with animal fights. Duels between *retiarii* and *secutores* include at least three victors and four deaths that are indicated with inscriptions of "vic" or "theta". The fights are completed and the weapons are strewn across the ground. With the exception of the gladiator in the upper left of the first panel (a *hoplomachus*), all other depicted gladiators are *secutores* and *retiarii*. The small figures standing between the groups of gladiators are attendants of the gladiators and possibly also referees. Most gladiators have name inscriptions written in Latin letters. The *venatio* scenes are equally deadly and the first panel shows two venatores fighting against a bull and a lion. Other animals, such as an ostrich and antelope are also shown in the panel, as are several dead *venatores* lying on the ground. The second panel is divided into two horizontal images. In the bottom half two *venatores* are fighting against leopards with spears and a total of four dead leopards are lying on the ground, with one leopard turning away from the scenes. One of the gladiatorial scenes includes two animal fights between venatores and leopards on the right side and possibly was attached to the second *venatio* panel.

Site: This mosaic consists of five equally large rectangular fields. It was brought to the Villa Borghese in 1834 after it was discovered in the *cryptoporticus* of the *peristyle* in the vicinity of the Tenuta di Torre Nuova and originally measured 31.36 m. Only about a third of the original length remains. The mosaic was then installed in the main room of the Villa Borghese. It is difficult to differentiate between the original composition and the reconstructions that took place when it was moved to the villa Borghese. It is known that some of the figures were rearranged to create a fuller composition. As a result this image is highly problematic.

Literature: Blake 1940, 113-5; Rocchetti 1961; Nardoni and Accodo 1989; Sabbatini Tumolesi 1990; La Regina 2001, 178; Junkelmann 2008, 144.

Cat.Nr.76 Verona

Findspot: via Diaz N°18 Current Location: Museo Archeologico del Teatro Romano

Date: early 3rd century CE Size: 0.56 x 0.56 m

Genre: mosaic Iconography: gladiatorial combat

Description: In this series of mosaic panels different stages of gladiatorial fights are depicted. In the first panel a defeated *retiarius* is lying on the ground with his arms flung in front of him and the victorious *secutor* is standing in front of him, a referee is also part of the scene. Name inscriptions are included, however, in the first panel very little remains (*secutor* …rior, *retiarius* Co… - given missio = m). In the second panel a *thraex* is defeating the *murmillo* Caecro(ps) who is dead (p), and a red stretcher is already in place. The third panel shows the *secutor* giving up (laying down the shield) in front of the *retiarius*. The other two panels that were discovered alongside the three gladiatorial scenes depict mythological scenes. In the first a female figure, possibly a Nereid, is sitting on an animal with the head of a donkey and fish tail. Only the head of a bull can be recognized on the second panel.

Site: The architectural context is not clear and the mosaic was discovered as a single find in 1935.

Literature: Rinaldi 2005, 68-73, Cat.Nr. 30; Junkelmann 2008, 107, fig. 49-51.

Raetia

Cat.Nr.77 Augsburg

Findspot: bath Current Location: largely lost

Date: late 2nd century CE Size: 4.85 x 3.70 m

Genre: mosaic Iconography: *venatio*, gladiatorial combat

Description: The mosaic is made up out of three rows of square mosaic panels divided by a simple guilloche. The scenes in the middle illustrate circus races while the panels in the top and bottom row all feature various stages of gladiatorial fights along with name inscriptions. The preserved drawing does not permit the identification of gladiatorial types as it is not detailed enough. In the bottom row from left to right, Siripus and Crispus are fighting against each other, the latter is lying on his back and his right arm is stretched out towards his opponent who is holding a sword. In the next panel are two gladiators equally paired, above the right one is the inscription Leonides. The next panel shows a bit more advanced fight. Here Alpus is attacking from the left against his opponent Lytra who appears to be awaiting the last blow. In the top row Aprius and Aiax are fighting against each other carrying a small round shields. In the next one Antonio is fighting against Manlius. This panel is a bit unclear and there might be a third person standing in the middle who might be a referee. The third panel shows Palumbus standing over Astir who is lying on the ground.

Site: Only a drawing of the mosaic survives. It is the earliest Roman mosaic discovered in Germany and was found in 1571. A few possible mosaic fragments might survive in the Augsburg Museum.

Literature: Parlasca 1959, 101-2, pl. 97.

Syria

Cat.Nr.78 Antioch **Fig. 2**

Findspot: House of the Worcester Hunt Current Location: Worcester Art Museum

Date: late 5th century CE Size: 6.25 x 8.66 m

Genre: mosaic Iconography: *venatio,* gladiatorial combat

Description: Eight brightly dressed hunters are featured on this mosaic. They are all either riding horses or on foot, armed with spears and bows and arrows. They are surrounded by fruit trees, bushes, and little groups of rocks, as well as lots of animals. Although many different animals are featured on this mosaic, the hunters are only in combat with the wild cats, such as lions, tigers with cubs, leopards, and a bear.

Site: The hunt mosaic was discovered in 1935 and installed in the Worcester Art Museum in 1936. It was discovered in Daphne-Harbiye, Sector 27-P, 1935 along with two other hunt mosaics in adjoining rooms, the so-called Honolulu Hunt in the Honolulu Academy of Art and the Mosaic of GH (Earth) in the Hatay Archaeological Museum, Antakya. The Worcester Hunt mosaic is

the largest and most intricate of the three. The walls of the house did not survive thus the archaeological context is unclear.

Literature: Lavin 1963; Becker and Kondoleon 2005, 228-37; Cimok 2005, 296-7.

Cat.Nr.79 Zeugma

Findspot:	house of Poseido	Current Location:	Gaziantep, Mosaic Museum
Date:	late 2nd century CE	Size:	4.40 x 5.50 m
Genre:	mosaic	Iconography:	*venatio*

Description: The birth of Aphrodite is shown at the center of this mosaic. She is sitting in a seashell as if on a throne that is being carried by sea centaurs. Above the scene is an unusual inscription naming the artist: "ζώσιμος σαμοσα[τε]ύς ἐποίει" - Zosimos from Samsota made this mosaic for the white foam coming from the depths of the sea". This mosaic is surrounded by a frieze of naked cupids with armed with either spears and shields or bow and arrow hunting wild animals such as leopards, tigers, lions, and bears. The type of animals depicted as well as the posture of the cupids is reminiscent of *venatores*.

Site: The villa was discovered during salvage excavations in 1999. The extensive mosaic decoration of this villa is beyond comparison and features a wide selection of themes from Greek myth. The excavations continued until 2000 when the house was completely submerged by the dam.

Literature: Darmon 2004; Ergeç 2007, 114-9; Donderer 2008b, 52-4.

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