This book provides a comprehensive account of mosaics of the ancient world from the early pebble mosaics of Greece to the pavements of Christian churches in the east. Separate chapters in part i cover the principal regions of the Roman Empire in turn, in order to bring out the distinctive characteristics of their mosaic workshops. Questions of technique and production, of the role of mosaics in architecture, and of their social functions and implications are treated in part ii. The book discusses both well-known works and recent finds, and balances consideration of exceptional masterpieces against standard workshop production. Two main lines of approach are followed throughout: first, the role of mosaics as a significant art form, which over an unbroken span illuminates the evolution of pictorial style better than any comparable surviving medium; and secondly, their character as works of artisan production closely linked to their architectural context.

Katherine M. D. Dunbabin is Professor of Classics at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. She is author of The Mosaics of Roman North Africa and has published widely in journals.

Title page illustration: detail, mosaic of musicians, Mariamin. Courtesy J. Balty.
MOSAICS OF THE GREEK AND ROMAN WORLD

KATHERINE M. D. DUNBABIN
For A. D. D. and in memory of T. J. D.
Contents

List of plates viii
List of figures x
List of maps xx
Preface xxi
Introduction 1

PART I: Historical and regional development

1. Origins and pebble mosaics 5
2. The invention of tessellated mosaics: Hellenistic mosaics in the east 18
3. Hellenistic mosaics in Italy 38
4. Mosaics in Italy: Republican and Imperial 53
5. The north-western provinces 73
6. Britain 88
7. The North African provinces 101
8. Sicily under the Empire: Piazza Armerina 130
9. The Iberian peninsula 144
10. Syria and the east 160
11. Palestine and Transjordan 187
12. Greece: the Imperial period 209
13. Asia Minor, Cyprus, Constantinople 223
14. Wall and vault mosaics 236
15. Opus sectile 254

PART II: Technique and production

16. Craftsmen and workshops 269
17. Techniques and procedures 279
18. The repertory 291
19. Architectural context and function 304
20. The patrons 317

Conclusions 327
Maps 331
Glossary of ornamental patterns 339
General glossary 342
Abbreviations and bibliography 344
Index of sites and monuments 348
General index 353

Plates 1–13 between pp. 74 and 75
Plates 14–25 between pp. 170 and 171
Plates 26–40 between pp. 266 and 267
Plates

plate 1 Etruria, House of the Mosaics, Nereid panel from threshold. Ecole Suisse d’Archéologie en Grèce, courtesy P. Ducruy.

plate 2 Pella, House 1.1, Lion Hunt, detail of lion’s head. Ekdoteike Athenon.

plate 3 Pella, House 1.1, Lion Hunt, detail of hunter. Ekdoteike Athenon.

plate 4 Thmus, Sophilos Mosaic, central panel. After Daszewski pl.a, courtesy DAI Cairo.

plate 5 Delos, House of Dionysus,  emblema with tiger-rider, detail of tiger. Photo Z. Welch.


plate 8 Pompeii vi 15.14, portrait of woman. Scala/Art Resource, NY.


plate 10 Vienne, iloral mosaic. Courtesy J. Lancha.


plate 12 Valence-sur-Base (Gers), vine pavement, detail of band of fruit trees. Photo M.-P. Raynaud, courtesy C. Balmelle.


plate 14 Woodchester, Villa, Orpheus and the beasts, detail of leopard. Crown Copyright NMR #864/411.

plate 15 Hinton St Mary, central medallion with bust of Christ. Crown Copyright NMR 8871/5364.

plate 16 Thydrus, House of the Dionysiac Procession, Room θ, vegetal designs, detail of scrolls. KMDD.


plate 18 Carthage, House of the Horses, Mosaic of Horses, detail of border. KMDD.


plate 24 Itala, geometric mosaic with bust of Dionysus. Photo Mario Producciones, courtesy Museo Arqueológico, Seville.

plate 25 Emerita, Cosmological Mosaic, detail of Nuns (Cloud) with Wind. DAI Madrid, photo P. Witte.

plate 26 Pedrosa de la Vega, Villa de la Olmeda, room 4, geometric mosaic. Photo J. Cortes, courtesy J. Cortes, P. de Palol.

plate 27 Pedrosa de la Veg, Villa de la Olmeda, room 1, border of panel with Achilles on Skyros, detail. Photo J. Cortes, courtesy J. Cortes, P. de Palol.

plate 28 Pedrosa de la Veg, Villa de la Olmeda, room 1, Achilles on Skyros, detail with heads of Achilles and daughter of Lykomes. Photo J. Cortes, courtesy J. Cortes, P. de Palol.

plate 29 Shahba-Philippiopolis, mosaic of Artemis and Actaeon, detail of border. KMDD.


plate 31 Sepphoris, Dionysiac mosaic, detail showing Drunkenness of Heracles. Photo Zeev Radovan, courtesy Z. Weiss.

plate 32 Shavei Zion, church, detail of cross in north aisle. KMDD.

plate 33 Madaba, Church of Map, detail of map of Holy Land, showing area around Jericho and river Jordan. KMDD.

plate 34 Hagios Taxiarchis, Mosaic of Seasons, panel with Winter. Courtesy Z. Welch.

plate 35 Nea Paphos, House of Aion, triclinium, Presentation of infant Dionysus. Courtesy W. A. Daszewski, Polish Archaeological Mission, with the kind permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

plate 36 Pompeii vii 8.23, House of the Small Fountain, aedicula-fountain, detail. KMDD.


List of plates

plate 39 Ostia, Building outside Porta Marina, hall with opus sectile, detail of frieze with floral scroll. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia.

plate 40 Ostia, Building outside Porta Marina, hall with opus sectile, panel with lion attacking stag. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia.
Figures

figure 1 Corinth, Centaur Bath, general view. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Corinth Excavations no.75–76–77–78, photo I. Ioannidou. page 6
figure 2 Corinth, Centaur Bath, detail of Centaur. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Corinth Excavations no.75–76–77, photo L. Bartziotou. 6
figure 3 Olynthos, House of the Comedian, andron mosaic. After Olynthus 8, pl.17.1. 6
figure 4 Olynthos, Villa of Good Fortune, plan. After D. M. Robinson, AIA 38, 1934, fig.1. 7
figure 5 Olynthos, Villa of Good Fortune, Dionysiac mosaic from andron. After D. M. Robinson, AIA 38, 1934, pl.29. 9
figure 6 Erytrai, House of the Mosaics, anteroom and andron. Ecole Suisse d’Archéologie en Grèce, courtesy P. Ducrey. 10
figure 7 Erytrai, House of the Mosaics, griffins and Arimasps from andron. Ecole Suisse d’Archéologie en Grèce, courtesy P. Ducrey. 11
figure 8 Sikyon, floral mosaic. DAI Athens, neg.78/433, photo G. Hellner. 11
figure 9 Pella, House 1.1, Lion Hunt. TAP Service, Athens. 12
figure 10 Pella, House 1.1, Dionysus on leopard. TAP Service, Athens. 12
figure 11 Pella, House 1.1, Dionysus, detail of head of Dionysus. Courtesy A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets. 13
figure 12 Pella, House 1.5, Stage Hunt signed by Gnosis. TAP Service, Athens. 12
figure 13 Pella, House 1.5, Stage Hunt, detail of border. Courtesy A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets. 15
figure 14 Vergina, Palace, room 13, drawing of floral mosaic. After M. Andronikos et al., To Anaktoro tes Bergines (Athens 1961) pl.16. 15
figure 15 Rhodes, Bellerophon and Chimaira. KB’ Ephoreia Proistorion kai Klasion Arkhaioteton Dodekanesou, courtesy I. Papachristodoulou. 16
figure 16 Lebena, Asklepieion, irregular mosaic. After Salzmann, pl.76, courtesy D. Salzmann. 19
figure 17 Pergamon, chip-mosaic. DAI Istanbul, Pergamon-Grabung neg.61.444, photo R. Braun. 20
figure 18 Selinus, temple A, mortar pavement (signinum) with bull’s head in wreath. KMDD. 21
figure 19 Morgantina, House of Ganymede, Ganymede and eagle. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University. 21
figure 20 Morgantina, House of Ganymede, detail showing head and arm of Ganymede. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University. 22
figure 21 Morgantina, House of Ganymede, detail showing lower body of Ganymede. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University. 22
figure 22 Alexandria, Shatby Stag Hunt. DAI Cairo Inst. Neg.f17445, photo D. Johannes. 24
figure 23 Alexandria, Shatby Stag Hunt, detail of Eros. DAI Cairo Inst. Neg.f17463, photo D. Johannes. 24
figure 24 Alexandria, Shatby Stag Hunt, detail of animal frieze. DAI Cairo Inst. Neg.f17467, photo D. Johannes. 25
figure 25 Thmuis, mosaic signed by Sophilos. DAI Cairo Inst. Neg.f17481, photo D. Johannes. 26
figure 26 Rome, mosaic of asaratos oikos, signed by Heraklitos, detail. Musei Vaticani Archivio Fotografico, Neg.n.xxxiv.32.32. 27
figure 27 Tibur, Hadrian’s Villa, Doves of Sosos. Archivio Fotografico dei Musei Capitolini, photo A. Idini. 28
figure 30 Delos, House ιιι q, Room ε, tessellated panel at centre of chip-pavement. KMDD. 31
figure 31 Delos, House ιιι N, room 1, tessellated panel at centre of chip-pavement. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.1807.20bis. 31
figure 32 Delos, Agora of the Italians, niche 10, geometric mosaic. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.1802.68. 32
figure 33 Delos, House of Dionysus, emblemata with tiger-rider. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.54406. 33
figure 34 Delos, House of the Dolphins, courtyard. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.1805.43. 34
figure 35 Delos, House of the Dolphins, courtyard, detail showing dolphins in north-west corner. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.1805.47. 34
figure 36 Delos, House of the Dolphins, courtyard, detail of border with signature. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.1805.55. 35
figure 37 Delos, House of the Masks, plan. After J. Chamonard, Delos xiv (1933), pl.l. 36
figure 38 Delos, House of the Masks, Room ε, emblemata with Dionysus. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.5043. 37
figure 39 Delos, House of the Trident, dolphin from peristyle. Ecole française d’Athènes, no.1.1805.35. 37
figure 40 Pompeii vi 11,10, House of the Labyrinth, cubic-

figure 41 Pompeii vi 12.2, House of the Faun, Alexander Mosaic. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s0045729 25747. 41

figure 42 Pompeii vi 12.2, House of the Faun, Alexander Mosaic, detail of Alexander. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s0037359 AL12050. 41

figure 43 Pompeii vi 12.2, House of the Faun, Tiger-rider. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s0097339 AL12049. 44

figure 44 Pompeii, 'Villa of Ciceró', Women at Breakfast (from *Synaristoi* of Menander) by Dioskourides of Samos. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s002019 AL12195. 45

figure 45 Pompeii, 'Villa of Ciceró', scene from *Theophrastoumen* of Menander by Dioskourides of Samos. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s0020113 AL12057. 46

figure 46 Pompeii viii 2.16, Marine scene. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s0057378 AL12198. 48

figure 47 Praeneste, Nile Mosaic. Alinari/Art Resource, NY; s0097334. 50

figure 48 Praeneste, Nile Mosaic, detail of upper section showing Nile landscape and fauna. Courtesy P. Meyboom, photo P. Jongste. 51

figure 49 Praeneste, Nile Mosaic, detail of central section showing inundation of Nile and Egyptian temple with Nilometer. Courtesy P. Meyboom, photo P. Jongste. 52

figure 50 Herculeanum, Sannite House, *signum pavement in tablinum*. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei, neg.2652. 54

figure 51 Pompeii, Villa of the Mysteries, room 47, *crustae-pavement*. KMDD. 54

figure 52 Pompeii vi 12.2, House of the Faun, *crustae-pavement in ala*. DAI Rome 1934.1847. 55

figure 53 Pompeii i 9.1, House of the beautiful Impluvium, atrium, pavement of mixed techniques. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD 77N14939. 56

figure 54 Lucas Feroniae, Villa of Volusii Saturnini, room 18, late Republican polychrome geometric mosaic. DAI Rome 83.142. 57

figure 55 Lucas Feroniae, Villa of Volusii Saturnini, room 13, early Imperial black-and-white geometric mosaic. DAI Rome 83.139. 58

figure 56 Lucas Feroniae, Villa of Volusii Saturnini, room 8, early Imperial black-and-white geometric mosaic. DAI Rome 83.358. 58

figure 57 Pompeii i 10.4, House of the Menander, *caldarium* mosaic, After A. Maiuri, *La casa del Menandro e il suo tesoro di argenteria* (Rome 1933) fig.69. 59

figure 58 Pompeii vi 8.5, House of the Tragic Poet, mosaic from entrance with watchdog and *cave canem*. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD, GN. 78847246. 60

figure 59 Ostia iii 9.32, *Insula* of the Muses, plan. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 1618. 61

figure 60 Ostia i 11.8.5, House of Apuleius, geometric pavement. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 955. 62

figure 61 Ostia iii 17.5, Caseggiato of Bacchus and Ariadne, Dionysus and Ariadne in arabesque design. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 990. 63

figure 62 Ostia i 4.2, Baths of Neptune, central hall with Neptune mosaic. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 905. 63

figure 63 Ostia iv 2.1, Baths of the Lighthouse, marine creatures and lighthouse. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico c 768. 64

figure 64 Ostia i 11.7.4, Square of the Corporations, booth no.21, mosaic with inscription of shippers and businessmen of Karalis. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 6344/1–2. 65

figure 65 Ostia i 11.7.4, Square of the Corporations, booth no.25. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico c 781. 65

figure 66 Ostia ii 11.8.6, Mithraeum of the Seven Spheres. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 6344/3. 66

figure 67 Ostia iii 9.1, House of the Dioscuri, marine scene, drawing of whole. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 1028. 67

figure 68 Tibur, Hadrian’s Villa, *Hospitalia*, black-and-white mosaics in *cubiculum*. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD 834.982. 67

figure 69 Tibur, Hadrian’s Villa, *Hospitalia*, black-and-white mosaics in *cubiculum*. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD 834.984. 68


figure 71 Rome, Baths of Caracalla, Mosaic of Athletes, reconstruction. Musei Vaticani, Archivio Fotografico Neg.N.xxxv.4.591. 70

List of figures

figure 73 Desenzano, Villa, vestibule (e), fishing Erotes, detail. Courtesy R. I. A. Wilson. 71
figure 74 Glanum, House of the Capricornus (iv), signium pavement with mosaic panel at centre. Photo A. Chéné, Centre Camille Jullian, no.333561, CNRS Aix-en-Provence. 74
figure 75 Ouzouer-sur-Trézée, multiple decor mosaic, drawing. After RecGaule 11.3, pl.LXIX no.467. 75
figure 76 Ouzouer-sur-Trézée, mosaic with head of Ocean. After B. Girton, ‘Visite des mosaiques gallo-romaines de Pont-Chevron à Ouzouer-sur-Trézée’, CMGR 1, 117–123, fig.1. 75
figure 77 Vienne, multiple decor mosaic with central panel showing Drunkenness of Hercules; drawing of original state. After InvGaule 1 174. 77
figure 78 Saint-Romain-en-Gal, mosaic with floral motifs in hexagons. After RecGaule 11.2, no.396, pl.CIXV, drawing R. Prudhomme, courtesy J. Lancha. 78
figure 79 Saint-Romain-en-Gal, Rustic Calendar, general view. After InvGaule 1 246. 80
figure 80 Saint-Romain-en-Gal, Rustic Calendar, detail showing baker at bread oven. Musée des Antiquités nationales, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, MAN 8316 88x6544. 81
figure 81 Vienne, Sainte-Colombe, Lycurgus and the vine, reconstruction drawing. Drawing R. Prudhomme, courtesy J. Lancha. 82
figure 82 Orbe, Mosaic of the Planetary Deities. Photo Hine, Allschwil (CH), courtesy Mme C. M. Castella. 82
figure 83 Cologne, mosaic of Dionysus. Rheinisches Bildarchiv, no.58276. 83
figure 84 Nennig, villa, amphitheatre mosaic. Photo Th. Zühmer, courtesy Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier, no.1890. 84
figure 85 Trier, Mysteries mosaic from Kornmark. Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier, no.8A-512. 85
figure 86 Valence-sur-Baise (Gers), vine pavement. Photo M.-P. Raynaud, courtesy C. Balmelle. 87
figure 87 Fishbourne, geometric mosaic in room 112. Fishbourne Roman Palace/Sussex Archaeological Society, courtesy D. Rudkin. 89
figure 88 Verulamium, geometric mosaic, no.7. The Verulamium Museum. 89
figure 89 Verulamium, mosaic of Ocean, no.8. The Verulamium Museum. 90
figure 90 Fishbourne, room 117, mosaic with Cupid. Fishbourne Roman Palace/Sussex Archaeological Society, courtesy D. Rudkin. 90
figure 91 Corinium, Barton Farm Villa, Orpheus and the Beasts. Crown Copyright NMR 8873/4006. 92
figure 92 Woodchester, villa, Orpheus and the Beasts. Crown Copyright NMR 8873/6863. 93
figure 93 Woodchester, villa, Orpheus and the Beasts, detail of stag. Crown Copyright NMR 8873/6876. 94
figure 94 Hinton St Mary, general view. Crown Copyright NMR 8896/7520. 95
figure 95 Hinton St Mary, detail, panel with hound pursing deer. Crown Copyright NMR cc71/612. 96
figure 96 Low Ham, scenes of Dido and Aeneas. Somerset County Museums Service, Taunton. 97
figure 97 Lullingstone, villa, mosaic showing Europa and the Bull, and Bellerophon and the Seasons. © English Heritage Photo Library. 98
figure 98 Isurium Brigantum (Aldborough), mosaic of Wolf and Twins. Leeds Museums and Galleries (City Museum). 99
figure 99 Rudston, Venus mosaic. Hull City Museums, Art Gallery and Archives. 100
figure 100 Kerkuane, Punic pavement of mortar and aggregate decorated with tesseae, including ‘sign of Tanit’. KMDD. 102
figure 101 Carthage, rue Astarte, Punic pavements of opus figidinum and tessellated threshold. Courtesy F. Chelbi, Institut National du Patrimoine, Tunis. 102
figure 102 Carthage, rue Astarte, Punic pavements, detail of tessellated threshold. Courtesy F. Chelbi, Institut National du Patrimoine, Tunis. 103
figure 103 Carthage, Floral Style design with busts of Muses. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum (no.103346). 104
figure 105 Acholla, Baths of Trajan, frigidarium, detail of central section. KMDD. 106
figure 106 Acholla, House of the Triumph of Neptune, cubiculum xxxii. Courtesy S. Gozlan. 107
figure 108 Thysdrus, House of the Dionysiac Procession, detail of triclinium. KMDD. 109
figure 109 Thysdrus, House of the Dionysiac Procession, room 4, vegetal designs with bust of personification of the year. KMDD. 110
List of figures

figure 110 Thuburbo Maius, House with Domestic Quarters, rooms xiii and xiv, geometric mosaics. CMT II.3, no.314, photo W. Graham, courtesy M. Alexander. 110
figure 111 Thuburbo Maius, House of Bound Animals, cubiculum ix, geometric mosaic. CMT II.1, no.78, photo W. Graham, courtesy M. Alexander. 111
figure 112 Thuburbo Maius, House of Protomai, Room ix, mosaic of animal protomaii. CMT II.3, no.261a, photo W. Graham, courtesy M. Alexander. 111
figure 113 Thysdrus, House of the Months, Calendar mosaic. DAI Rome 64.292. 112
figure 114 La Chebba, Neptune and the Seasons. After InvTun 86. 112
figure 115 Althiburus, Hunting Scenes. Institut National du Patrimoine (Tunisie), courtesy M. Ennaifer. 113
figure 116 Althiburus, Hunting Scenes, detail. Institut National du Patrimoine (Tunisie), courtesy M. Ennaifer. 114
figure 117 Neapolis, House of the Nymphs, Chryses before Agamemnon. Courtesy R. J. A. Wilson. 115
figure 118 Smirat, Amphitheatre Mosaic. KMDD. 117
figure 119 Carthage, House of the Horses, Mosaic of Horses. KMDD. 118
figure 120 Carthage, House of the Horses, Mosaic of Horses, panel of horse accompanied by bowling equipment. KMDD. 118
figure 121 Caesarea (Cherchel), Agricultural Labours. KMDD. 119
figure 122 Carthage, Mosaic of Dominus Julius. DAI Rome 61.532. 120
figure 123 Zliten, villa, amphitheatre mosaic, frieze with gladiator scenes. DAI Rome 61.1891. 121
figure 124 Zliten, villa, amphitheatre mosaic, frieze with gladiator scenes. DAI Rome 61.1892. 121
figure 125 Zliten, villa, mosaic of Volutes. DAI Rome 61.1880. 122
figure 126 Silin, villa, mosaic of Aion and the Seasons. After O. Al Mahjub, CMGR III, unnumbered col.pl. 123
figure 127 Silin, Villa, scene with bull tossing victims. After O. Al Mahjub, CMGR III, unnumbered colour plate. 124
figure 128 Thamugadi, House west of baths of Philadelphe, Floral mosaic. Centre Camille Jullian, no.168758, CNRS Aix-en-Provence. 125
figure 129 Thamugadi, llot 81, mosaic of acanthus scrolls, central panel with marine Venus. Courtesy S. Germain. 126
figure 130 Sabratha, Basilica of Justinian, aisle, with designs of pine-trees and palmettes. KMDD. 128
figure 131 Sabratha, Basilica of Justinian, nave, with design of vine scrolls. DAI Rome 61.2239. 128
figure 132 Tyndaris, Baths, crustace-pavement, framing black-and-white mosaic panel with triskeles. Courtesy D. von Boeselager. 131
figure 133 Lilybaeum, Floral Style mosaic with busts of the Seasons. Museo Archeologico Regionale di Palermo, no.17583, courtesy Dott.ssa C. Di Stefano. 132
figure 134 Piazza Armerina, villa, plan. Adapted from Filosofiana III.111, Flaccovio Editore, 1982. 132
figure 135 Piazza Armerina, corridor of Great Hunt (36). Drawing after Gentili, Villa Erculiah fig.5. 134
figure 136 Piazza Armerina, Circus Races (3). Drawing after Gentili, Villa Erculiah fig.3. 135
figure 137 Piazza Armerina, Small Hunt (30). Fototeca Unione no.52285. 135
figure 138 Piazza Armerina, vestibule to baths (21), family and attendants entering baths. Fototeca Unione. 136
figure 139 Piazza Armerina, triconch (57). Drawing after Gentili, Villa Erculiah fig.12. 137
figure 140 Piazza Armerina, triconch, apse with wounded giants. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD, gfn F10272. 138
figure 141 Piazza Armerina, portico of peristyle (194). Fototeca Unione FU 3958, courtesy G. Benedettini. 139
figure 142 Piazza Armerina, corridor of the Great Hunt (36), detail showing animal cage loaded on ox-cart. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD, gfn F10290. 140
figure 143 Piazza Armerina, corridor of the Great Hunt (36), detail showing capture of rhinoceros and bison. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD, gfn F10278. 140
figure 144 Piazza Armerina, semi-circular portico (40b), Erotes fishing. Drawing after Gentili, Villa Erculiah fig.6. 141
figure 145 Piazza Armerina, Hunting Children (43a), detail. Courtesy R. J. A. Wilson. 141
figure 146 Piazza Armerina, triconch (57), victims of Hercules, detail of Bistonian Horseman and Bull. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD, gfn F10266. 142
figure 147 Tellaro, villa, Hunting Scenes, detail with tigress attacking fallen hunter. Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali e Ambientali e P.I. della Regione Sicilia, courtesy G. Vozza. 142
figure 148 Emporiae, Neapolis, signinum pavement with Greek inscription Hedykoitos. KMDD. 145
List of figures

figure 149 Emporaeia, House 1, black-and-white mosaic. KMDD. 145
figure 150 Emporaeia, emblema with Sacrifice of Iphigencia. DAi Madrid n 312–84–12, photo P. Witte. 146
figure 151 Marbella, villa, plan of preserved section. Drawing by A. García y Belido, after CMEEp iii, fig.22. 146
figure 152 Italica, House of Neptune, mosaic of Neptune and pygmies. KMDD. 147
figure 153 Emerita, House of the Mithraeum, Cosmological Mosaic. Drawing after Uwe Städtler in A. Alföldi, Aion in Mérida and Aphrodisias (Mainz am Rhein 1979), Beilage. 148
figure 154 Emerita, Cosmological Mosaic, detail of top. DAi Madrid n 105–78–15, photo P. Witte. 149
figure 155 Emerita, Cosmological Mosaic, detail of left side. DAi Madrid n 23–75–12, photo P. Witte. 149
figure 156 Italica, House of the Planetarium, mosaic with busts of the planetary deities. KMDD. 151
figure 157a Conimbriga, House of the Fountains, view of rooms around small peristyle. Instituto Português de Museus, Arquivo Nacional de Fotografia. 152
figure 157b Conimbriga, House of the Fountains, triclinium, mosaic 10. Instituto Português de Museus, Arquivo Nacional de Fotografia. 153
figure 158 Complutum, House of Bacchus, plan of mosaics. After D. Fernández-Galiano, Complutum 1 (1984), fig.568. 154
figure 159 Complutum, House of Bacchus, corridor with servants offering drinks.Courtesy D. Fernández-Galiano. 155
figure 160 Pedrosa de la Vega, Villa de la Olmeda, room 1, Hunting Scene. Photo J. Cortes, courtesy J. Cortes, P. de Palol. 156
figure 161 Pedrosa de la Vega, Villa de la Olmeda, room 1, Achilles on Skiros. Photo J. Cortes, courtesy J. Cortes, P. de Palol. 157
figure 162 Carranque, villa, basin with head of Ocean. KMDD. 157
figure 164 Antioch, Atrium House, triclinium. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg.164. 161
figure 165 Antioch, Atrium House, triclinium, Drinking Contest of Dionysus and Heracles. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg.1159. 162
figure 166 Antioch, Atrium House, triclinium, Judgement of Paris. Musée du Louvre, photo M. Chuzeville. 163
figure 167 Antioch, House of Drinking Contest, triclinium, central panel showing drinking contest of Dionysus and Heracles. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg.5273. 164
figure 168 Drawing of chevrons in rainbow style. Computer-assisted drawing by Tanya Kane. 164
figure 169 Antioch, Constantinian Villa, Room 1, general view in situ. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, PA 2280. 165
figure 170 Antioch, Constantinian Villa, detail showing hunting scene between two Seasons. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, PA 5230. 165
figure 171 Shahba-Philippopolis, mosaic of Artemis and Actaeon. Courtesy J. Balty. 167
figure 172 Shahba-Philippopolis, mosaic of marine Aphrodite. Courtesy J. Balty. 167
figure 173 Shahba-Philippopolis, mosaic of Tethys. Courtesy J. Balty. 167
figure 174 Shahba-Philippopolis, allegorical mosaic of Aion. Courtesy J. Balty. 168
figure 175 Apamea, building under cathedral, mosaic from corridor with panel of dancing maidservants (with label Therapenides) greeting the return of Odysseus. ACL Brussels, courtesy J. Balty. 169
figure 177 Apamea, building under cathedral, frieze with Judgement of Nereids, detail showing Kassiopeia. Courtesy J. Balty. 170
figure 178 Mariamin, mosaic of Musicians. Courtesy Prof. Dr Sultan Muhesen, Directeur Général des Antiquités et des Musées, Damascus. 171
figure 179 Mariamin, mosaic of Musicians, detail showing dancer with castanets. Courtesy J. Balty. 172
figure 180 Mariamin, mosaic of Musicians, detail showing flautist. Courtesy J. Balty. 172
figure 181 Palmyra, House of Cassiopée, reconstruction. Drawing after H. Stern, Les mosaïques des Maisons d’Achille et de Cassiopée à Palmyre (Paris 1977), fig.2. 173
figure 182 Edessa, Family Portrait mosaic. Drawing after J. Segal, Edessa, 'The Blessed City' (Oxford 1970), pl.3, Courtesy of Thames and Hudson. 173
List of figures

figure 183 Edessa, Funerary Couch mosaic. Drawing after J. Segal, Edessa, 'The Blessed City' (Oxford 1970), pl.2, courtesy of Thames and Hudson. 174
figure 184 Edessa, Mosaic of Barsimya with portrait of Abgar. Courtesy Prof. Dr H. J. W. Drijvers. 174
figure 185 Bishapur, palace of Sapor, panel with Dionysiac heads. After R. Ghirshman, Bichâpour II, Les Mosaïques Sassanides (Paris 1956), pl. ix.1. 175
figure 186 Bishapur, palace of Sapor, Harpist. After R. Ghirshman, Bichâpour II, Les Mosaïques Sassanides (Paris 1956), pl.v.2. 175
figure 188 Antioch, Qaousiye church, north aisle. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. PA 2190. 177
figure 189 Antioch, mosaic with bust of Anancosis at centre of geometric carpet-pattern. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. PA 2967. 178
figure 190 Antioch, mosaic of Striding Lion. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. PA 2948. 179
figure 191 Antioch (Daphne), House of the Phoenix, Phoenix mosaic in situ. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. PA 1803. 179
figure 192 Antioch (Daphne), Phoenix mosaic, after restoration. Musée du Louvre, photo M. Chuezeville. 180
figure 193 Antioch (Seleucia), Quatrofoil church (so-called Martyrium), animal carpet. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. PA 4621. 181
figure 195 Antioch, Yaktô complex, Megalopsychia mosaic, detail showing Silenus and nurse. Courtesy J. Balty. 185
figure 196 Apamea, Triclinos building, mosaic of Hunt. ACL Brussels, courtesy J. Balty. 183
figure 197 Apamea, Triclinos building, mosaic of Hunt, detail. ACL Brussels neg. 13781 b, courtesy J. Balty. 184
figure 198 Sarrin, Dionysiac panel from mythological mosaic, detail showing Silenus and nurse. Courtesy J. Balty. 185
figure 199 Deir el-`Adas, church of St George, panel from nave with camel-driver. Photo Donceel, courtesy P. Donceel-Voûte. 185
figure 200 Masada, Western Palace, Oecus 456, Herodian mosaic. Courtesy of Gideon Foerster and the Institute of Archaeology, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and by permission of the Israel Exploration Society. 188
figure 201 Sephoris, general view of triconium with Dionysiac mosaic. Photo Zeev Radovan, courtesy Z. Weiss. 189
figure 202 Hammath Tiberias, synagogue, general view. After M. Dothan, Hammath Tiberias (Jerusalem 1983), pl.26, courtesy of Israel Exploration Society. 190
figure 203 Beth Alpha, synagogue, panel with signs of zodiac. After E. Sukenik, The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha (Jerusalem, 1932), pl. x. 191
figure 204 ’En-Gedi, synagogue, panel with Hebrew and Aramaic inscriptions. Israel Antiquities Authority no.223780, courtesy S. Durocher. 192
figure 206 Shavei Zion, church, pavement of nave. KMDD. 194
figure 207 et-Tabgha, Church of Multiplication, Nilotic panel from left transept. After A. M. Schneider, The Church of the Multiplication of the loaves and fishes at Tabgha on the Lake of Gennesaret and its mosaics (London 1937), pl.a. 195
figure 209 Gerasa, Church of SS. Cosmas and Damianos, panel showing Georgia wife of Theodoros as donor. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 197
figure 210 Nebo, Church of SS. Lot and Procopius, view of nave. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 198
figure 211 Nebo, Church of SS. Lot and Procopius, detail of vine scrolls. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 198
figure 212 Madaba, Church of Apostles, mosaic with bust of Thalassa and signature of Salamanios. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 200
figure 213 Madaba, Hall of Hippolytus, eastern section showing scenes of Phaedra and Hippolytus (below), Aphrodite and Adonis (above). Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 201
figure 214 Madaba, Hall of Hippolytus, city personifi-
List of figures

- cations outside border. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 201
- figure 215 Madaba, Church of Map, map of Holy Land. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 202
- figure 216 Madaba, Church of Map, detail showing Jerusalem. KMDM. 203
- figure 217 Kastron Meafa, Church of St Stephen, view of nave and aisles. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 204
- figure 218 Kastron Meafa, Church of St Stephen, panel from intercolumniation showing vignette of Kastron Meafa. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 205
- figure 219 Ma’in, Acropolis Church, scene originally showing lion and ox but with iconoclastic restorations. Archive Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, courtesy M. Piccirillo. 206
- figure 220 Khirbet el-Mafjar, Palace, view of hall. Israel Antiquities Authority, courtesy S. Durocher. 207
- figure 221 Khirbet el-Mafjar, Palace, apse of diwan. Israel Antiquities Authority, no. 35571, courtesy S. Durocher. 208
- figure 222 Corinth, Anaploga Villa, mosaic in situ. American School of Classical Studies, Corinth excavations no.62–45–1. 210
- figure 223 Isthmia, Baths, great hall, black-and-white mosaic. Isthmia Excavations, courtesy T. Gregory. 211
- figure 224 Olympia, Kladeos Baths, restored plan showing mosaics in situ. After H. Schleif, IV Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia (Berlin 1944), pl.22. 212
- figure 225 Corinth, Roman Villa, drawing showing mosaics in situ. After T. L. Shear, Corinth v, The Roman Villa (Cambridge, Mass. 1930), pl.1 213
- figure 226 Thessalonica, mosaic of Dionysus and Ariadne. ΙΣΤ Ephoria Proistorikon kai Klasikon Arkhaioteton, courtesy E. Trakosopoulou. 215
- figure 227 Kos, House of Silenus Mosaic, panel with gladiators. KMDD. 216
- figure 228 Mytilene, House of Menander, triclinium, panel with bust of Menander. Κ’ Ephoria Proistorikon kai Klasikon Arkhaioteton, Mytilene, courtesy A. Arkhontidou-Argyre. 217
- figure 229 Mytilene, House of Menander, panel with Synaristosaii. Κ’ Ephoria Proistorikon kai Klasikon Arkhaioteton, Mytilene, no.71178, courtesy A. Arkhontidou-Argyre. 218
- figure 230 Mytilene, House of Menander, panel with Theophorounene. Κ’ Ephoria Proistorikon kai Klasikon Arkhaioteton, Mytilene, no.71176, courtesy A. Arkhontidou-Argyre. 219
- figure 231 Sparta, portrait of Alkibiades. Photo N. Kontos, for TAP Service, Athens, courtesy Th. Spyropoulos, E’ Ephoria Proistorikon kai Klasikon Arkhaioteton. 220
- figure 232 Nikopolis, Basilica A, north transept, panel with inscription of Dometios. Ephoria Byzantinon Arkhaioteton, Ioannina. 220
- figure 233 Argos, Villa of the Falconer, mosaic of Months, panels showing January to June. After G. Åkerström-Hougen, The Calendar and Hunting Mosaics of the Villa of the Falconer at Argos (Stockholm 1974), pl.1, courtesy G. Åkerström-Hougen. 221
- figure 234 Argos, Villa of the Falconer, drawing of room with stibadium and Dionysiac mosaic. Drawing O. Søndergard, courtesy G. Åkerström-Hougen. 222
- figure 235 Pergamon, Peristyle House 2, room 9, drawing of reconstructed mosaic. DAI Istanbul, Pergamon-Grabung 87/10–3. 224
- figure 236 Pergamon, Building 2, mosaic of Silenus with child Dionysus. DAI Istanbul, Pergamon-Grabung 91/80–6, photo E. Steiner. 224
- figure 237 Pergamon, Building 2, mosaic of masks. DAI Istanbul, Pergamon-Grabung 90/228–2, photo E. Steiner. 225
- figure 238 Ephesos, Terrace House 2, Dwelling ii, south wing, mosaic of Nereid and Triton. Courtesy W. Jobst, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. 226
- figure 239 Nea Paphos, House of Dionysus, general view of triclinium. With the kind permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. 227
- figure 240 Nea Paphos, House of Dionysus, west portico of peristyle, panel showing Dionysus and Ikarios. With the kind permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. 228
- figure 241 Nea Paphos, House of Dionysus, peristyle, friezes with hunting scenes of arena. With the kind permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. 229
- figure 242 Nea Paphos, House of Aion, triclinium, general view of mosaics. Drawing by S. Medeksza, courtesy W. A. Dzasewski. 231
- figure 243 Nea Paphos, House of Aion, triclinium, judgement of the Nereids, detail showing crowning of Kassiopeia. With the kind permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. 231
- figure 244 Constantinople, Great Palace, mosaics from...
List of figures

figure 260 Pompeii vi 7.23, House of Apollo, nymphaeum, wall panel with Achilles on Skyros. DAI Rome 56.463. 246

figure 261 Caesarea (Cherchel), fountain basin with Ulysses and the Sirens. KMDD. 247

figure 262 Salamis, Cyprus, Gymnasion Baths, detail of wall mosaic showing the river-god Euratos. With the kind permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. 247

figure 263 Rome, Mausoleum of Constantia, ambulatory vault, panel with Erotes and birds. DAI Rome 57.1253. 248

figure 264 Rome, Mausoleum of Constantia, ambulatory vault, panel with strewed branches. DAI Rome 57.1247. 249

figure 265 Rome, Necropolis under St Peter’s, Tomb M (Mausoleum of Julii), mosaic of vault, with Christ as Sun-god. Archivio Fotografico, Fabbrica di San Pietro, neg.3507, courtesy Dr A.M. Pergolizzi. 250

figure 266 Ephesus, Terrace House 2, Dwelling 11, mosaic of vault, vines enclosing busts of Dionysus and Ariadne. Courtesy W. Jobst, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. 251

figure 267 Centcelles, Mausoleum, general view of dome. DAI Madrid neg.r.57–77–10, photo F. Witte. 252

figure 268 Centcelles, Mausoleum, detail of hunting frieze. DAI Madrid neg.r.56–76–12, photo F. Witte. 253

figure 269 Pompeii vi 12.2, House of the Faun, tablinum, sectile pavement with pattern of lozenges forming perspective cubes. DAI Rome 82.2838. 255

figure 270 Pompeii 1.7.11, House of the Ephebe, triclinium, sectile pavement. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD, neg.GN 80057503. 256

figure 271 Carthage, House of the Greek Charioteers, beddng of amphora fragments for sectile pavement, showing lay-out of design. Courtesy J. Humphrey. 257

figure 272 Drawing showing fabrication process of sections of sectile pavements in various forms, illustrating positions of support/bedding elements on reverse: based on examples from Hadrian’s Villa. Drawing L. Fabiani, after Guidobaldi, Villa Adriana, fig.4, courtesy F. Guidobaldi. 258

figure 273 Drawing showing fabrication process of sectile pavement with simple square-in-square design. After Guidobaldi, Pavimenti fig.5, courtesy F. Guidobaldi. 259

figure 274 Sample patterns of opus sectile based on square module. After Guidobaldi, Pavimenti fig.8, courtesy F. Guidobaldi. 260

figure 275 Ostia ii 6.1.1, House of the Nymphaeum, sectile pavement, central section. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico 8 1068. 260
List of figures

ment. After MosAntIt Palatium fig.26, courtesy Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato. 260

figure 277 Tibur, Hadrian's Villa, Valley of Tempae, sectile pavement of alabaster lozenges. After Guidobaldi, Villa Adriana no.164, pl.xxv, courtesy Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato. 261

figure 278 Ostia 1.14.5, House of Amor and Psyche, sectile pavement, central section. Superviing! Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 1071. 262

figure 279 Rome, Palatine, nymphaeum of Domus Transitoria, fragments of Erotes from decoration in incrustation technique. DAI Rome 64.941. 263

figure 280 Pompeii vii 4,31/51, House of the Coloured Capitals, Dionysiac frieze in incrustation technique. DAI Rome 64.1827. 264

figure 281 Ostia, Building outside Porta Marina, hall with opus sectile, reconstruction drawing. After Ostia 6, pl.lxxviii. 265

figure 282 Kenchreai, glass opus sectile panel with harbour scene. American School of Classical Studies at Athens. 267

figure 283 Kenchreai, glass opus sectile panel with Plato. American School of Classical Studies at Athens. 268

figure 284 Mascula, geometric mosaic with signature of workshop of Iunior. Centre Camille Jullian, CNRS Aix-en-Provence. 272

figure 285 Thebes, mosaic with inscription containing signatures of Demetrios and Epiphanes. Courtesy P. Assimakopoulou-Atzaka. 277

figure 286 Sidi bou Ali, Enfidaville (Africa Proconsularis), repaired mosaic signed by Sabinianus, 'without a painter'. After L. Foucher, Karkhago 9, 1958, pl.2a. 277

figure 287 Ostia, fragmentary grave stele showing mosaicists preparing tesserae. DAI Rome 80.3238. 281

figure 288 Diagram of mosaic foundations. Computer-assisted drawing by Tanya Kane. 282

figure 289 Frangolise, Villa San Rocco, threshold mosaic of tablinum. Photo M. A. Cotton, courtesy G. Métraux. 283

figure 290 Frangolise, Villa San Rocco, threshold mosaic of tablinum, detail showing laying-out lines and guidelines scored on nucleus. Photo J. B. Ward Perkins, courtesy G. Métraux. 283

figure 291 Frangolise, Villa San Rocco, threshold mosaic of tablinum, diagram showing construction of laying-out lines. Drawing G. Métraux, after M. Cotton, G. Métraux, The San Rocca Villa at Frangolise (British School at Rome 1985) fig.13, courtesy G. Métraux. 284

figure 292 Stabiae, Villa Arianna, black-and-white mosaic showing painted and incised guidelines on nucleus. Courtesy Prof. C. Robotti. 284

figure 293 Stabiae, Villa Arianna, black-and-white mosaic, detail of guidelines. Courtesy Prof. C. Robotti. 285

figure 294 Utica, House of the Cascade, room xxvii, guidelines for maeander painted on setting-bed of mosaic. CMT 11.1, no.36, courtesy M. Alexander. 285

figure 295 Carthage, House of the Horses, Mosaic of Horses, detail of border with head of boy, KMDD. 286

figure 296 Thuburbo Maius, House of the Bound Animals, triclinium xviii, composite photograph. CMT 11.1, no.33a and b, pl.xi, photo W. Graham, courtesy M. Alexander. 287

figure 297 Delos, House b, Room f, drawing of geometric mosaic. Ecole française d'Athènes, no.6807. 292

figure 298 Selection of black-and-white patterns from Rome and Ostia. After Décor 117a, 117f, 159a, 159c, 160a, 160f. 293

figure 299 Ostia 11.8.5, House of Apeuleius, shield of triangles with Gorgoneion superimposed on earlier sectile pavement. Superviing! Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 582. 293

figure 300 Variants on pattern of adjacent octagons forming squares. After Décor 163a, 163b, 164a, 164b, 164c, 166b, 167d, 167f, 166a, 166c. 294–5

figure 301 Selection of Floral Style patterns from Africa Proconsularis. After Décor 246f, 249e, 242d, 242c, 231c, 151g. 296

figure 302 Selection of looped patterns from late antiquity. After Décor 149g, 246f, 231a, 244d, 244e, 235g. 297

figure 303 Mola di Gaeta, emblema with Theseus and Minotaur. DAI Rome 71.354. 301

figure 304 Chieti, emblema with Theseus and Minotaur. DAI Rome 71.353. 302

figure 305 Pompeii v 2,1, House of the Silver Wedding, cubiculum 2. Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, ICCD 79497378. 306

figure 306 Delos, House of the Trident, plan. After J. Chamonard, Délos 8, Le quartier du théâtre (Paris 1922), pl.xii. 307

figure 307 Pompeii vi 11.8–10, House of the Labyrinth, plan of section around colonnaded naus (Rooms 39–46). After Strocka, CedellOrso fig.45, courtesy Prof. V. M. Strocka. 308

figure 308 Pompeii vii 2.44–46, House of the Bear, plan. After Ehrhardt, CedellOrso fig.47, courtesy Prof. V. M. Strocka. 309

figure 309 Acholla, House of the Triumph of Neptune, plan. Drawing R. Prudhomme, courtesy S. Gozlan. 311
List of figures

figure 310 Antioch, House of the Buffet Supper, mosaic from dining-room showing food laid out for banquet. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. 3263. 312

figure 311 Antioch, House of the Evil Eye, mosaic from entrance. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. 5556. 312

figure 312 Kephallonia, mosaic from entrance to house. KMDD. 313

figure 313 Ostia 1.19.3, Hall of the Measure, scene of the measurement of grain. Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia, Archivio Fotografico b 881. 314

figure 314 Antioch, House of the Boat of Psyches, mosaic from triclinium. Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, neg. 1534. 315

figure 315 Pompeii vii 16 (Ins.Occ.), 12–16, House of Umbricius Scaurus, garum jar from atrium. Courtesy R. Curtis. 319

figure 316 Emerita, mosaic with charioteer Marcianus. Museo Nacional de Arte Romano, Mérida, Archivo Fotográfico, courtesy J. M. Álvarez Martínez and A. Velázquez Jiménez. 320

figure 317 Ivailovgrad, villa, portrait of man with two children. DAI Rome 86.149, 151. 321

Maps

1. Greece and Asia Minor 331
2. Italy and Sicily 332
3. Gaul and the Germanies 333
4. Britain 334
5. North Africa 335
6. Iberian peninsula 336
7. Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Cyprus 337
8. The east 338
WHEN, IN the mid-1960s, I first became interested in late Roman mosaics as a topic for a doctoral thesis, it was an eccentric choice. In the English-speaking world Roman Art was little studied in those days, and it seemed incredible that the humble genre of mosaic pavements could be accorded the same sort of scholarly attention as was given, for example, to Greek vase-painting. Indeed the existence of the later centuries of the Roman Empire was itself barely recognised as a part of the discipline of Classics; the ensuing thesis was in fact submitted for the degree of D.Phil. at Oxford to the Faculty of Modern History, the material being deemed a couple of centuries too late to qualify as Ancient History. It would have seemed even more incredible then that thirty years later the annual Bulletin of an international Society devoted to the study of ancient mosaics (AIEMA) would exceed in size the Année Philologique of those days.

While this increase in interest can only be gratifying to those who have devoted themselves to this aspect of ancient art and artisanship, it is equally clear that to write a book about mosaics now is a very different task from what it was then. The mass of material and the pace of its publication – in both senses – impose ever greater challenges on the scholar. The questions that are asked of the material are new and more complex. It is probably presumptuous for any one person to pretend that she can control all the publications dealing with the Graeco-Roman world in its full geographical and chronological breadth. I have tried as best I could to see for myself the mosaics about which I have written, and to visit both museums and excavations old and new in most regions of the Roman Empire; inevitably there are gaps, and there have been many occasions when I have arrived at sites, only to find the mosaics covered over, or the museum closed. On the other hand, not a few of the mosaics that I did once see have now suffered irreparable decay or have disappeared for ever.

But presumption may be thought at times to be justifiable. Despite the interest in mosaics, which has led to so many individual publications or regional corpora, there has been a dearth of syntheses which attempt to look at the whole course of the development of the art form. The difficulties mentioned above have been sufficient to discourage scholars perhaps more prudent than I from so rash an undertaking. But the result has been that students of the ancient world have no easy access to an important expression of ancient culture; mosaics remain little known outside a circle of specialists, particularly in the English-speaking world. This is the gap that I set myself to fill, rashly or otherwise, more years ago than I now care to remember. I completed work on the text in 1996; in a few instances, it has been possible to take account of publications that came to my attention since then.

In the process I have incurred debts to those scholars who have shown hospitality in welcoming me to excavations and museums, who have answered questions, discussed problems, and given me copies of their publications, as well as to a great many other individuals, sometimes anonymous, who have afforded much needed assistance in the course of my travels. I am especially grateful to all those, from more than twenty countries, who have furnished photographs or have granted me permission to publish them. It is impossible to acknowledge here by name all who have assisted me in these many ways. The institutions and individuals that supplied the illustrations used in this book are given in the list of illustrations, and I take this opportunity to express my thanks to all of them once again for their cooperation and helpfulness. While it is invidious to single out individuals from among very many who have helped me in so many ways, I would wish to acknowledge especially the assistance and encouragement given by Janine Balty, Demetrios Michaelides, Roger Wilson and the late Margaret Alexander over many years. Without these friends and colleagues this book would not have been written, and without their help it would have more imperfections than it has.

I have benefited over a number of years from the experience of teaching a graduate course on mosaics, and in the process I have learnt a great deal. I am grateful to those students whose questions caused me to rethink and
clarify some of my most dearly held prejudices. To these students and former students who have worked as research assistants I owe a more specific debt: Michael Garmaise, John Tamm, Alexis Young, Gay Chamberland, Zographia Welch, and Bridget Day, for their assistance in the genesis of this book. Thanks are also due to David Meadows for his computing and graphics skills, and to Tanya Kane for preparing two drawings.

No book like this can now be written without the support of those institutions whose munificence alone permits scholarly research to be undertaken and published, especially under the increasing constraints that beset academic life. I acknowledge with much gratitude the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada during the long period that it has taken to write this book. It would not have been possible to provide the essential colour illustrations but for generous publication grants from the Millard Meiss Publication Fund, the Dr M. Aylwin Cotton Foundation, and the Arts Research Board of McMaster University. I am also grateful to the staff of the Ashmolean Library for much help over the years. Pauline Hire of Cambridge University Press has shown patience and wisdom and provided constant encouragement over the protracted gestation of this book; to her, to Caroline Bundy, and the rest of the editorial staff at Cambridge University Press, my warmest thanks.

Above all, I owe the completion of this book to my husband, William Slater. It is a cliché to say that the work could not have been completed without his help; in the particular circumstances of the final months of work on it, it is the simple truth.

Ancaster, Ontario

November 1997