EXCAVATIONS OF THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT MELOS.

THE HALL OF THE MYSTAE.

[Plates I.—III.]

The Hall of the Mystae is a Roman building on the western slope of the ancient town of Melos. The principal object and result of the excavation begun by Mr. D. Mackenzie and myself in April and extended by Mr. Cecil Smith in May 1896, was to put on record its fine mosaic pavement. We were fortunate in being able to call to our aid a skilful and indefatigable draughtsman. Mr. Charles Clark, architect to the School, joined us in Melos as soon as he could be spared from the Athens excavations, and worked upon the mosaic for several weeks in the full heat and glare of a Mediterranean summer. Of the illustrations, fruits of his patient labour, which this paper serves to introduce, Plate I. represents the two figured panels on the scale of 1:25, and is a very faithful rendering of their general effect; while Plate II. gives part of the finest panel on the scale of 1:5, and shows the method of execution in detail; it is reproduced from one of a series of rubbings' coloured cube by cube upon the spot, which are practically full-size facsimiles of all the principal figures. The spirited figure of the cock (Plate III.), supplied by
another rubbing, gives a good idea of the life-like force of the design. For the restoration attempted in the key-plan (Fig. 4) we are jointly responsible.

The mosaic seems to date from the first half of the third century.

The site is marked H on a sketch-plan of the ancient town which accompanies Mr. Cecil Smith's account of our work in Melos (J. H. S. xvi. p. 348). Mr. Cecil Smith has there described the mosaic (p. 354); he has since published two inscriptions which we found there and inferred from them that the place belonged to a Society of Dionysiac Mystae (J. H. S. xvii. p. 14).

Previous History of the Site.

This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that other inscriptions naming the Mystae have been found at the same spot. An Athenian magazine1 of the year 1862 contains the following among other archaeological news: 'In Melos in the ground called Τρεμμβλια near the ancient theatre in the course of an excavation made by private persons there was lately found a mosaic pavement said to be about 40 m. in length, a wall of squared stones with a door in it and various marble sculptures bearing inscriptions, apparently of Roman date.' After describing them the report goes on 'the excavation is being made with the knowledge and indeed under the supervision of the local authorities.' How little this meant is implied by the words which follow, 'we hope that the objects found may not be dispersed, as has happened on other occasions.' Finally it is suggested that an ephor should be sent from Athens. From enquiries made on the spot, it appears that there was no official excavation; the Government contented itself with stopping the enterprise of the 'private persons' and securing the marbles for the Athens Museum, where they now are. They consist of a bust of Aurelia Euposia (Fig. 8) set up ἐν τῷ ἱδίῳ αὐτῆς ἐργῷ by certain Περιβαίμουι (Cavvadas' Catalogue 424),2 the head of a young man bound with a fillet (Catalogue 459), and two columns, the ends of which have been sawn off for convenience of transport. On one of these columns is incised a figure of Athene, on the other that of the Good Fortune of Melos, and in each case there is inscribed a prayer that the Goddess may be propitious to Alexander, founder of the Holy Mystae (κτίστη εἰερῶν μυστῶν). They are fully described and published in a valuable article by Wolters on 'Melische Kultstatuen' (Ath. Mitth. xv. 1890, p. 246). The figure of the Tyche of Melos has acquired a certain importance in the history of art since Furtwängler used its testimony in support of his restoration of the Melian Aphrodite.3 It is reproduced in Fig. 1.

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2 The inscription is published on p. 16 of the last volume (xvii) of this Journal. The early notices mention a headless bust and two heads. The second of these may have been the head which is now fitted to the bust.

The description of the site as ἐν τῇ θέσει Τρεμυθλα πρὸς τῷ ἐκεῖ ἄρχαιον θεάτρῳ is accurate in the sense that the hill-side called Tramithia and the theatre are in the same part of the island; but they lie ten minutes walk apart on different sides of the central acropolis-ridge. The identity of that site with ours, which is in Tramithia but not near to the theatre, is put

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1 We have usually followed Ehrenberg's map (Leipzig, 1889) in spelling the name Tramythia, but Tramithia is as near to the local pronunciation. The form Τρεμυθλα suggests a derivation from τρέμω = Τρεμόω. Steph. Byz. mentions a place called Τρεμυθός (v.l. Τρεμυθός) in
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beyond a doubt by our discovery of columns of the same diameter and material as those in the Athens Museum and by the local story that parts of such columns had been sawn off and sent to Athens with other marbles from this site. An idea of the lie of the ground may be gained from Mr. Clark's sketches, figs 2 and 3, and from the key-plan on the opposite page. That part of the site which was first pointed out to us as containing a mosaic was a small field just south of a mule-path which leads from the villages on the heights to the Tramithia landing-place. Like most other fields on those highly cultivated hill-sides it is a terrace bounded by higher and lower terraces, each supported by a massive retaining wall locally called τράφος (for τάφος). In this case there was a rising traphos to the east and a descending traphos to the south; the other sides of the rectangle were formed by the mule-road which gradually descends from the higher level of the terrace on the east to the lower level of that on the south, curving round our field and cutting off its north-west corner. The course of the road-wall and of the terrace-wall to the east is shown by the dotted lines W W on the key-plan; it was only under them that we found the mosaic in first-rate preservation. The field has a downward slope from east to west, and at the lower end the pavement had been obliterated by cultivation; further east, where there was some depth of soil to protect it, considerable injury had been caused by the recklessness of the excavators of 1861. It was then that a great part of the fish-panel was destroyed. They dug as far as the eastern terrace-wall, and seem then to have worked down from the upper field and to have penetrated as far as the door in the east wall of the Roman building; but the τράφος between the two terraces happened to be the boundary between two properties, and that fact preserved it inviolate and with it the whole panel of the vines which lay below. This belt of unknown ground had weighed on the consciences of local treasure-hunters ever since. We heard of at least two attempts to explore it. In one case the adventurers tunnelled under the road, breaking through the north wall of the Roman building, and worked along its inner face as far as the corner-column A which is still in situ. They dared not go further, fearing that the mass of stones overhead would fall in on them, and retired by the way they had come, but not before they had found a marble head. This head, which was sold to the Athens Archaeological Society in 1884 and passed with their collections into the National Museum, has since proved to belong to the statue of a hierophant which we found lying on the mosaic in 1896 (Fig. 6).

Cyprus and derives the name ἀπό τῶν περὶ τῶν τόπων περικυνιῶν τερμήθων, ὡς Τύρης τερμήθως καλοῦσι. The name would be formed like that of Ραμυνις in Attica = Ραμυνῖς from Ράμων. The form τρέμηθως is further attested by Nicaud. Thes. 844 τρεμήθως νέων τολωτείας καρπών.

The Melian 's τῆς Τραμιθία seems parallel to 's τῆς Ζωκία and 's τῆς Πλατανία in the same island. For place-names in Greece derived from trees see Tozer, Highlands of Turkey, ii. p. 107. Sibthorp (Flora Graeca Prodromus, ii. p. 256) and Fiedler (Reise, i. p. 539) say that Pistacia Terebinthus grows abundantly in the Greek islands. Both give the modern Greek name as τερπήμος. Mr. Bickford Smith gives τραμήθη as the Cretan form.
The Building.

We demolished the eastern terrace-wall, cleared the remains of mosaic in the lower field, and found that we had two panels and part of a third. Later Mr. Cecil Smith pulled down the wall on the north and uncovered a long strip of mosaic, which not only proved the existence of a fourth panel, but also preserved just so much of the geometric design of a fifth as enabled us to complete it and to determine the dimensions of the whole.

The building was a long hall running east and west, 8·32 m. wide and at least 23 m. long (27 ft. 4 in. x 75 ft.). The east and north walls are in great part preserved; the south wall has almost disappeared, but enough remains to justify us in restoring it on the analogy of the north; the west end is wholly destroyed. The tessellated pavement did not occupy the whole width of the hall; along either side ran a stylobate 1·50 m. broad, raised 0·27 m. (10½ inches) above the floor, supporting a row of unfluted marble columns. Of the marble slabs of the stylobate only one survives; it is under the single base which remains in position; but the dwarf walls which carried the stylobate are preserved, 14 cm. high. As for the columns, A is in place and the position of the two adjoining columns is indicated by blocks which once supported the marble slabs under their bases; they give 3·32 m. (10 ft. 10 in.) as the intercolumniation.

The exact length of the hall was not determined; this might possibly have been done by digging for the foundations of the north-west angle from the field beyond the road; but there was great risk of injuring some valuable olive-trees. We dug down at the only possible place, where there happened to be a gap in the olive-grove, and found the outer face of the north wall (at F in key-plan) under the roadway, some five feet below the level of the mosaic. This part of the wall probably dated from Hellenistic times and originally rose above ground, for it was better built than the upper part, and along its foot there was an accumulation of pottery ranging from third-century Greek to Roman. The evidence is slight, but one is inclined to infer that the Hall of the Mystae stands on the site of a Greek building, using its walls as foundations; in that case the earlier floor-level may be some feet below the mosaic. Beyond the point where we suppose the west wall to have stood the ground falls away; had the building extended further in that direction it would have required very massive substructures; but of these no trace remains. It can hardly therefore have been longer even by one intercolumniation than we have shown it in the key-plan. On the other hand the remains of the mosaic prove that it cannot have been shorter. The restoration of seven columns on each side may be regarded as fairly certain.

We were also unable to dig as far as we wished to the east. Once beyond the shelter of the thick terrace-wall we found that the whole area in the upper field had been ransacked and filled in with stones. We cleared part of the little chamber at the north-east angle and worked some feet
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beyond the large door in the east wall, but there were no mosaics. As the débris was eight feet deep and difficult to handle we did not feel justified in going further for the sake of completing our plan.

It is probable that the principal entrance was at the west end, and the east doorway led from the body of the hall into a chancel-like extension, an ἀδυτον opening out of the τελεστήριον. Just such an inner sanctuary may be seen in the plan of the Baccheion, a building much like ours in date and character, excavated by Dr. Dörpfeld between the Pnyx and the Areopagus. The internal arrangements of the hall are in agreement with the view that this was its principal end. Of the five mosaic panels the western is the simplest, the eastern the most elaborate. Close to this doorway in the south-east angle stood a square structure (D in key-plan), obviously of importance, for the outer border of the mosaic was compressed and cut short to leave room for it; it must have been a small shrine or altar. In a niche on the opposite side (C on key-plan) stood in all probability the statue of a priest to be discussed later, which we found fallen on the pavement. Before giving up the idea of exploring the supposed adytum we sank a pit 8 m. east of the mosaic, and found fragments of a wall covered with red stucco, its floor-level being

FIG. 3.—VIEW FROM THE WEST END.

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about the same as that of the mosaic. Somewhat further east we must suppose an ancient terrace-wall; for it was at a much higher level, though only 20 m. further away, that we found the basis (Fig. 6) dedicated to Dionysos Trieterikos. The circumstances under which it was found are described in J. H. S. vol. xvii. p. 14. We dug round the spot, but found only some walls of Roman date, a flagged court, in the middle of which the basis stood, and a cobbled path leading towards the mosaic. It is very probable that these buildings were in some way connected with the Hall of the Mystae.

Before passing to the mosaics it may be noted that the walls of the Hall were covered with a thick coat of plaster. In demolishing the traphos we came upon a quantity of plaster including many fragments of mouldings.

The Pavement.

The space between the stylobates is filled by the mosaic pavement 5'35 m. (17'1 ft.) wide, and as restored 22'22 m. (nearly 73 ft.) in length. The length that is preserved is 19'20 m. (63 ft.). The whole design is framed in an unusually broad triple border, 1'38 m. (4 ft. 4 in.) wide. The width of the panels is 2'67 m., just double that of the border and half that of the whole pavement.

There are five panels; the following measurements do not include the guilloche border, which is 17 cm. wide, but are taken up to its edge:

I. Vines, birds, gazelle and hare . . . 3'28 x 2'67 m.
II. Fish and fisherman . . . . . 2'67 x 2'67
III. Geometric . . . . . . . 6'48 x 2'67
IV. Probably a figure-subject, destroyed . . 3'07 x 2'67
V. Geometric, as restored . . . . 3'28 x 2'67

It will be seen on reference to the key-plan that the places of the columns correspond broadly though not exactly with the divisions between the panels. Panel III. is twice as long as I., which again is the same length as V. The preservation of these proportions, as of those between the breadth of the panel and the border, shows how carefully the mosaic was designed for the building.

The detailed execution and technique of the Melos mosaic are admirably exhibited in the large scale drawings (Plates I., II. and III.). Glass tesserae are freely used in the birds, beasts, and fishes; all these figures are carried out with a skill that must have been the result of long experience. The glass tesserae are much smaller than the marble tesserae; the latter are usually square or nearly so at the top, while the former are of all shapes, and seem to have been chipped off from a slab of glass as they were required. They are mostly blues and greens. Mr. Henry Powell, who is an expert in modern glass-mosaic, has been so kind as to point out that these glass tesserae seem to have been translucent; some of them retain their transluc-
Fig. 4.—Key-Plan. W—Modern Terrace-Walls.
ence, others have lost it owing to the action of weather. The colouring matter in the blue tesserae is cobalt, in the blue-green, copper, in the other shades of green, iron. It is difficult to say when the practice of adding arsenic or tin to make the tesserae opaque first came into use. Besides glass and marble a local material, the lustrous black obsidian, is used with great effect, especially in the long geometrical panel.

The Panel of the Vines.

The panel of the vines is the most elaborate and the best preserved (Plate I). Mr. Clark has been wonderfully successful in reproducing its originality, its grace of design, and its rich harmonious colouring. The subject is unusual; it must have been chosen for the place of honour in the Hall as one especially appropriate to the society of Mystae and their patron-god. This special local significance may help to explain the unconventional character of the composition, its freedom and want of symmetry; it is like the work of a man who has put aside his pattern-book and is feeling his way towards a fresh design. The elements which he had to group together were familiar; the animals grapes and leaves are the work of a practised hand; but in the stiff lines and abrupt curves of the branches there is the irresolution, the hesitating touch, of an experiment. Strangest of all is the want of balance in the disposition of the birds and beasts among the foliage. The whole south-east corner is given up to grapes and leaves and tendrils with no living thing among them. The contrast must have been all the more conspicuous before the pedestal (B in key-plan) was thrust into this end of the panel; it cuts so rudely into the design that there can be no doubt of its being a later insertion. We may perhaps connect the different treatment of the south-east quarter of the panel with the shrine or altar which stood close by in the south-east angle, and suppose that even in his glowing picture of the fruitful earth, blessed with a luxuriant crop that leaves enough and to spare for bird and beast as well as man, the artist has found means to suggest the reverence due to the god and his gifts. He shows us the wild creatures gleaning, but hints that the boldest of them spares the clusters that ripen in the shadow of the god's altar. The explanation may seem fanciful; at any rate it is not unlike the fancy of the man who wrote μόνον μὴ ἀδόρο, Give them water and they will swim, among the fish of the adjoining panel.

I have claimed for the panel of vines a good deal of originality. Among published drawings of mosaics one looks in vain for any that closely resembles it. But its general scheme, the decoration of a rectangular panel by means of tree-like forms springing from the corners, was by no means a new one. It may be traced back to the fashion of filling the spandrils of a square panel containing a round medallion—spaces such as in our fish-panel are occupied by masks—with branches issuing from a stem or vase set diagonally in each corner; and this fashion, which appears several times at
Pompeii, was doubtless borrowed from the favourite vase-and-foliage border, of which our scroll-border with its vase at each angle is a good, though late and elaborate, example.

The nearest parallels to our design are furnished by some vine-mosaics which have come to light in North Africa. They seem to mark an earlier stage of development; the vines spring formally and symmetrically from vases placed in the angles; they are not allowed to cover the whole field, but form a broad frame to a central picture-panel. It is as if their derivation from the scroll-border were still remembered. On the other hand the birds among the branches and the Cupids busied in gathering grapes show that the frame is in process of acquiring an independent pictorial importance. In a mosaic from the Arsenal at Sousse (Hadrumetum) just published by M. Gauckler (Rev. Arch. 1897, Pl. ix. p. 8 ff.) the central picture representing the Triumph of Dionysos is surrounded by a comparatively narrow frame of interlacing vines. In a magnificent design which is the principal glory of the House of the Laborii at Uthina (published by the same writer in Monuments Piot, Vol. iii. Pl. xx.-xxiii.) the vines have encroached much further, and the central picture has become subordinate to the animated vintage-scene. A third design of the same type, found in the baths at Kourba, forms part of the rich collection in the Bardo at Tunis. In each case the African vine-mosaics contain a central picture representing Dionysos; the omission of this feature, as well as of the angle-vases and of the Cupids gathering grapes, is in keeping with the greater simplicity of the Melian panel. That the general idea of the design was commoner than the few instances which I have collected would imply, is made probable by its wide distribution in early Christian times, when the imagery of the vine, beloved in Jewish poetry and Christian teaching, was reproduced in every branch of art. The vintage-mosaic on the ceiling of the ambulatory of Santa Costanza at Rome, a church built about the middle of the fourth century, is a good instance of a perfectly pagan design adopted for the sake of its associations.\(^\text{1}\) The amorini who are plucking the grapes, leading wains and treading the wine-press, were doubtless felt to be incongruous in a church; they do not appear in the later vine-mosaics. Rather the Christian significance of the design is set beyond doubt by some such inscription as that of a mosaic-paved apse at Ancona in which every leaf has the form of a cross—\textit{Vinea facta est diletta in cornum in loco uberi}.\(^\text{2}\)

It is in keeping with the relatively late date of the Hall of the Mystae that the panel of the vines finds its closest parallel in the pavement of a Christian basilica. The same symbolism is Dionysiac in the one case, Christian in the other. The design is essentially the same, and it is difficult to believe that the interval of time between the two can be much more than

\(^\text{1}\) De Rossi, \textit{Mosaici cristiani}, xvii., xviii. A coloured paper cast and a coloured drawing by Zeri are exhibited in the South Kensington Museum.

a century. The pavement which so closely resembles ours is that of the church at Orléansville in Algeria; an inscription which forms part of the mosaic shows that the building was begun in 324 and completed before 340.¹

It is commonly said that in the early Christian centuries the use of mosaic pavements diminished, and mosaic work was almost confined to walls and ceilings. Of late years however a surprising number of Christian mosaic pavements have been discovered in Syria and Palestine. Several of them have the spreading vine pattern. The best known instance is the pavement of a church discovered by Renan's expedition at Kabr-Hiram near Tyre and afterwards transported to the Louvre.² The general design recalls the African mosaics published by Gauckler; four vines spring from vases placed in the corners of an oblong panel; their branches however are quite formally arranged so as to encircle a series of medallions placed in rows of five across the design. An inscription fixes the date of the pavement according to Renan's interpretation at 575 A.D., in the reign of Justin II. De Rossi ascribed the vine-panel on the ground of its style to the fourth century, but later discoveries seem to confirm Renan's conclusion. In particular two mosaics of this type have been found at Jerusalem, one on the Mount of Olives in 1871, the other outside the Damascus gate in 1894.³ Both bear Armenian inscriptions; the former can be dated with comparative certainty to the middle of the sixth century; while the latter, as Mr. A. S. Murray has pointed out, though retaining much of the refinement of classical work, may well belong to the vigorous art of the age of Justinian. A simpler mosaic from Medaba in Moab (Pal. Fund Quarterly, 1895, p. 207) resembles the older type in having a single medallion containing a head as the centre towards which the diagonally placed trees converge.

Our Melian vine-panel seems to be a link, geographical as well as chronological, between the two main groups of similar designs; those from North Africa, which are at their best in the second and third centuries, and those of Palestine which seem to date from the fifth and sixth of our era. In Africa as elsewhere there has been a tendency to place the decline of mosaic-work too early; a study of the mosaics from Carthage in the British Museum shows that good work was done there long after the time of the Antonines, and the same view is maintained by M. de la Blanchère (Collections du Musée Alaoui, 1890, p. 17 ff.) in publishing the spirited groups of race-horses from Hadrumetum which he assigns to the fourth century.⁴ There is a rich field for investigation alike in Africa

¹ Rev. Arch. iv. (1847), Pl. 78, p. 661. Traces of a fish-panel were found in the same church. This juxtaposition of earth and sea, conventional in pre-Christian mosaic, and retained perhaps because to the Christian the fish as well as the vine had a mystic meaning, is seen in other early basilicas of North Africa, e.g. at Tipasa, Mélanges d'Arch. et d'Hist. tom. xiv., and at Sertei, Mélanges G. B. de Rossi, p. 345.

² Renan, Mission de la Phénicie, Pl. xlix. p. 607.


⁴ To the fourth century too the British Museum authorities ascribe the Carthage pavement of the Mutha. Its decorative design of cypress-like trees growing in vases and converging towards the centre is a very beautiful develop-
and in Palestine, and for the present it would be premature to do more than indicate the general relationship of the two groups of designs. It must be remembered that they are not likely to have been the exclusive property of mosaic-workers, who often borrowed and adapted the ideas of wall-painters and modellers in plaster.\textsuperscript{1} Mr. Cecil Smith has already hinted at the possible influence of similar textile patterns in comparing the Melos vine-panel to some of the older Persian carpets.\textsuperscript{2} The tree with birds in its branches, springing sometimes from a kantharos-like pot, sometimes from a mound of earth, is a favourite subject in woven stuffs and embroideries in Persia, India and even China.

The birds are for the most part conventional, always excepting the cock (Pl. III). The gazelle (Pl. II.) was perhaps intended to represent the wild goat of the Cyclades, which still survives on Anti-milo; but the figure which the \emph{ψηφοδέτης} chose from his pattern-book was certainly drawn from a North-African gazelle—a striking proof of the North-African influence which we have already had reason to suspect. It may be compared with a reclining gazelle which is represented eating grapes from a basket on the Sousse Arsenal mosaic. The crouching hare of our panel finds a parallel in the same part of Africa.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{The Panel of Fish (Plate I.).}

To the picture of fruitful earth succeeds one representing the harvest of the sea. It is less elaborate than some of the fish-mosaics in the Naples Museum which seem to present a side-view of a tank or a section taken through the sea, with the surface marked by a line near the top of the picture and fish swimming to and fro in the green water: and less ambitious than the great floors representing the Triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite which have been found in the provinces. In Roman Africa pavements representing fishing scenes were often the appropriate ornament of an \emph{impluvium}. The inherent qualities of glass-mosaic are so well adapted to depict the glistening scales and iridescent colouring of fish that the subject became increasingly popular.

Just as in the preceding panel the principal figures are placed upon the north side of the hall, so here the position of the fisherman and the motto over his head presuppose that the spectator stands on that side. But this also is a decorative composition, not a realistic picture, and is meant to be intelligible from whatever point of view it is seen. The throng of darting

\begin{itemize}
  \item of the older tree-patterns. \textit{Archaeologia}, xxxviii. Pl. ix.-xiii. It was originally planned for a dome rather than a floor. Cf. Garrucci, \textit{Arte cristiana}, iv. Tav. 255.
  \item The ceiling-mosaics in the side-chapels of S. George at Salonica imitate not only the painted coffers but also the cornice-mouldings of late classical architecture. Texier and Pullan, Pl. xxxiv.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} Compare a tile-work design of vines, grapes and birds from 'the south gate of the Tope Maidan, Teheran, 17th cent.' reproduced in the Cross Gallery of the South Kensington Museum.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} De la Blanchère, \textit{Musée Alaoui}, p. 22.
\end{itemize}
fish follows the circular frame in an endless wheeling movement, for which a fixed centre is supplied by the absurdly disproportionate figure of the little fisherman perched in their midst.\(^1\) Owing to the injuries done to the panel by previous excavators no part of the boat remains; Mr. Clark has restored it on the analogy of many similar mosaics, making the boat nearly as disproportionate to the man as he is to the fish. One could imagine him fishing from a rock like three fishermen figured on a silver patena from the coast of Algeria\(^2\); but this would be unusual in a mosaic. The boat on Plate I. is sketched in from the fish-panel at Sousse, a picture which furnishes a vivid illustration of a passage in Aelian describing the four methods of fishing: δίκτυελα or netting, κόντωσις or spearing, κυρτεία or catching by means of the κύρτη (Latin nassa), a basket-trap like our "weels" and "eel-bucks," and ἀγκυστρεία or angling with hook and line.\(^3\) Of the four methods Aelian considered line-fishing the most sportsmanlike, and trapping the least worthy of a free man. The Sousse mosaic when it was complete had a boat in each corner; in one the fisherman is striking a fish with a trident, in another he is about to cast a net, in a third he holds a cord to which three bottle-shaped basket-traps are attached; the fourth corner, in which ἀγκυστρεία was doubtless represented, has been destroyed. The fisherman on the Melian panel holds a rope, the loose end of which passes under his left arm, but we have no means of deciding what was at the end of it. Like other boatmen from Charon upon the lekythoi onwards he wears the chiton exomis.

![Fig. 5.](image_url)

The words μένον μὴ ὄδωρ picked out in black tesserae on the white ground above the fisherman's head (Fig. 5) have been happily explained by Dr. Sandys, who compares them with Martial's Epigram I. xxxv.

Artis Phidiaeae toreuma clarum,  
Pisces adspicis; addae aquam, natabunt.

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1 The idea of fish swimming in a circle is used with equal effect, as Mr. Cecil Smith points out, on a series of red-figured plates from South Italy, among the latest examples of Graeco-Italian painted pottery, which were probably intended to be used as fish-plates at table. *Brit. Mus. Vase Catal.* F. 259 ff.


Martial is describing a chased silver bowl, an old piece of Greek plate; when it was filled, the fish with which the interior was decorated appeared to swim, just as the ships painted in certain black-figured kylikes floated when they were filled with wine.

In compressing some such epigram into three words the artist has made the point a little obscure. His self-praise was certainly justified during our excavations by the expert criticisms of local fishermen. They readily recognised and named most of the fish, and were never tired of admiring the life-like play of light and colour on the scales. One detail baffled them as well as ourselves—the globular object with a slender neck to the right of the fisherman. It looks like nothing so much as a gourd-shaped glass bottle, three parts full of dark-blue liquid, the upper part being empty and transparent; but this does not correspond with any known kind of fishing-appliance; neither a κύρτη nor a gourd-float would be transparent; so we are constrained to suppose that it represents some marine creature. The name πίνα (classical πίνα, a bearded mussel) was proposed and rejected.

The Geometric Panels and Border.

The two geometric panels are typical specimens of Roman provincial mosaic. They are not original compositions like the two preceding panels, but stock designs. In skeleton, as is shown on the key-plan (Fig. 4), they are based on different systems of intersecting octagons, such as any one experimenting with regular geometric design must inevitably discover. In the case of the long panel the intersecting sides of the octagons bisect one another, and divide each octagon into a square and four hexagons. The next step is to subdivide each hexagon into a square and four rhomboids. By this device the original octagonal planning is effectually masked, and a cross-like form made up of eight rhomboids becomes the predominant feature of the design. In this form the pattern appears at Pompeii; it is increasingly common in the provinces during the second and third centuries.

The design of the western panel, where the octagons intersect at their angles, is at no time so common as the other, and is hardly found before the third century. Almost the only building, besides the Hall of the Mystae, where these two patterns occur together, is the somewhat late British villa of Weldon in Northamptonshire.1

The character of the border is a further evidence of late date. The swastika-like wheel-pattern is very common in the later floors of Britain, Gaul, and Germany. The flori scrolls of the vase-and-foliage border find parallels in Christian rather than classical mosaic; and the proportion (1:4) of the width of the border to that of the whole mosaic is characteristic of corridor-pavements in the third and fourth centuries A.D.2

1 Lysons, Rel. Brit. Rom. I., Pt. ii., Pl. vii. Pl. 41. The latter can hardly be earlier than the 4th century.
2 E.g. at Silchester, Archaeologia, iv. p. 241, and at Halicarnassus, Newton, Hist. Discoveries,
The Sculpture and Inscriptions.

The clue to the identification of the building had already been given by the basis dedicated to Dionysos Trieterikos (Fig. 7 below) when in demolishing the great trrophos we came upon a headless statue which proved to be a portrait-herm of a hierophant, Marcus Marius Trophimus, set up by the Mystae (Fig. 6). One of our workmen had previously told us of a head which he had found in the same part of the building, and his description of its beard and wreath enabled us upon our return to identify it with an unpublished head which is thus described in Cavvadias' Catalogue of the Athens Museum: '329. Portrait-head of a man wearing a wreath, with a short beard and moustache and curly hair; small life-size; work of Roman times. Found in Melos, and bought by the Archaeological Society in 1884. Eye-brows and pupils indicated. End of nose broken. Parian marble?
Mr. Cecil Smith has since taken a cast from the neck of the head in Athens, and tried it upon the herm in Melos; the two were found to join accurately at the back of the neck; in front the surfaces had been chipped and did not meet, but the identification was quite satisfactory. The marble of both head and body is singularly white even for Parian.

The statue represents—or will, when head and body are united—a middle-aged man with broad face, full cheeks, curly hair, and clipped beard. The wreath on his head is of ivy and flowers, a wreath such as Dionysos often wears. He is dressed in a chiton which is girt up above the knee with a deep fold falling over and concealing the girdle, a nebris confined by a broad belt and passing over the left shoulder, and a mantle. Part of the mantle is brought forward and thrown over the right fore-arm, so as to provide the starting-point of a puntello to support the right hand; the stump of it is seen on the drapery below the break in the arm. The right hand was found, and when it is readjusted the arm will be complete but for some of the fingers; there is evidence that the hand held a curved vase, phiale or kantharos. No part of the left arm, which is broken above the elbow, was discovered. It was sharply bent, and the hand was raised nearly to shoulder level and probably held some heavy attribute such as a thyrsos, to judge from the stump of a cross-support which projects from the upper arm.

In accordance with a custom of ancient and more especially Oriental religion the priest is here represented in the character of the god. There are several much-restored copies of a statue which represented Dionysos as wearing a girt-up chiton, a nebris confined by a belt, a mantle, and long hunting-boots. The figure is usually restored as holding a kantharos in the right hand, and a thyrsos in the outstretched left; the left arm rests on the head of an archaic idol. The type was known in the Cyclades; it appears on a late Greek silver coin of Andros (B. M. Catalogue, Crete and Aegean Islands p. 86, No. 2, Plate XX. 10). The obverse is ‘Head of young Dionysos r., his hair long and wreathed with ivy,’ like that of our statue: reverse ‘ἈΝΑΠ[ΙΩΝ] youthful male figure (Dionysos) l., wearing short chiton; his r. is extended down above a tripod, his left is placed on the top of thyrsos (?)’; I have examined the coin itself and thought that I recognised a nebris passing over the shoulder. There was a famous temple of Dionysos in Andros, containing a fountain which ran wine at the festival called Θεοδάεια; the figure on the coin probably reproduces the temple-statue. It recalls Callistratos' description of a bronze Dionysos by Praxiteles, which wore an ivy-wreath and a nebris and held a thyrsos in the left hand. The Deepdene statue is decidedly Praxitelean, and may be directly related to the type which was worshipped in Andros and was adopted, as the attire and attitude of the Hierophant prove, by the Τεροι Μύστατα of Melos.

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1 Clarac, Vol. IV. Pl. 695, Figs. 1614, 1615. The former, at Deepdene, = Michaelis, Ancient Marbles in Great Britain, p. 280. For other instances of the type, see Roscher, Myth. Lex., p. 1133 (Dionysos in Art, by Thrämer). A pardalis sometimes takes the place of the nebris.

2 In our figure the artist has compromised: the hoofs are cloven, but the mask is a panther's.

The lower part of the figure consists of a plain shaft, on which the inscription is cut, and a larger base meant to fit into a pavement. The back and sides of this base are for the most part left rough, which accords with the supposition that the herm stood in the niche (C in key-plan) near which it was found. In front the smoothly dressed surface shows where the base met the marble stylobate. Three akanthos leaves spring from the pavement-level and clothe the foot of the shaft.

The inscription, which in the forms of its careful deep-cut lettering resembles that on the Dionysos Trieterikos basis (Fig. 7), cannot be much later than the end of the second century; on the other hand the coarse and ugly workmanship of the hierophant and the mouldings on the basis make it difficult to date either of them as early as Hadrian's time. Both may be older than the Hall of the Mystae; at any rate the niche looks as if it had been built to accommodate the herm.

A later group of inscriptions, in which Ξ and Ψ are used for Σ and Ω, consists of the prayers to Athene and the Fortune of Melos incised on two columns of the Hall, and the dedication on the bust of Aurelia Euposia (Fig. 8). To these we may perhaps add the inscription on the mosaic (Fig. 5 above), which seems to have had ψ in the last word. The poor style of the bust, in particular the clumsy lines of its rectangular pedestal, and the rudeness of the sculpturings on the columns mark a further style of degradation; they may belong to the early part of the third century, when the names Aurelius and Aurelia were very common. The phrase ἐν τῷ ἔδρῳ αὐτῆς ἔργῳ implies that the Hall or some part of it had been built or restored at the expense of this Aurelia Euposia. We have already seen reason, on grounds of style, to assign the mosaic to the first part of the third century. It may have formed part of the ἔργων in question. Alexander, who on the column-inscriptions is called κτιστής of the Mystae (Fig. 1), must have earned this honorary title by some similar benefaction; it is not necessary to suppose
that he was the original founder of the Society. His appeals to the
favour of Athene and Tyche, the guardian-goddesses who appear on the
Roman coinage of the island, suggest that the cult of Dionysos Trieterikos
had been newly introduced and might arouse the jealousy of the older
divinities;¹ and the fact that these appeals were incised in a prominent
position on columns of the Hall may mean that he was responsible for the
building.

With regard to the style and date of the three heads found upon our
site (Cavvadias, Catalogue, 329, 424, 459) Mr. Crowfoot, who has made a
special study of portrait-sculpture, writes to me from Athens as follows:—

`These heads all seem to belong to the same period, the early decades
of the third century A.D. The close-cut hair of the boy is similar to that

1 The worship of Athene, as the very archaic character of the xoanon on coin and column-relief
shows, was much older than that of the Tyche of Melos. But the latter patriotic cult may have
been established as early as the 4th century b.c., by the remnant of the old population
whom Lysander sent back. Cf. the Tyche made by Praxiteles for Megara, and his `Bona
Fortuna,' which was at Rome when Pliny wrote. The people of Antioch were doubtless
following an established fashion when they set up a statue of the Fortune of their city
early in the 3rd century. See Wolters' article in Ath. Mitth. xv. For the Melian type of
Tyche bearing the infant Plutus, cf. the statue
at Thebes, Paus. ix. 16, 1,
worn by Alexander Severus and his successors, and the short curls of the hierophant to those of the emperors at the beginning of the century. The coiffure of Aurelia may be related to some of the fashions which prevailed in Rome during the second quarter of the same century, or may be a modification of an earlier fashion, set perhaps by Julia Domna. (It would obviously be rash to say that the Melian ladies were always successful in copying the short-lived fashions of the capital.) Such a date suits the style perfectly. The bust of Aurelia is the rudest, but all three are as good as most contemporary Athenian works. The surface is polished and the eyebrows not raised but incised; in both points this is a contrast with the treatment usual at Athens about the middle of this century, of which we have a dated example in the Kosmete, No. 388 (Archonship of Kasianos, 236 or 245 A.D. Cf. Dumont, *Sur l’Ephèbie attique*, I. p. 247). The Melian works are at least successful in portraying distinct characters, and are interesting, therefore, for the light which they throw upon “certain people of importance in their day.” The sour face of the hierophant is hardly more attractive than the lady’s expression of obstinate bigotry; combined they are sure evidence of the psychological atmosphere of the third century, and differ strikingly from the air of blasé refinement which is dominant among the Antonines.’

To the inscriptions already published may be added a mason’s mark

\[ \Phi \alpha \]

cut on the top of a column-drum at the S.E. angle.

*The Society of Mystae.*

Associations of worshippers of particular deities had been common in Greece since the fourth century B.C. under the name of ἅργεδώνες, θιασώται, or ἐπανασταλ. The Mystæ of Dionysos Trieterikos may be compared with a number of other Dionysiac societies, calling themselves οἱ Μυσταὶ, which flourished especially in Asia Minor and Thrace during the second and third centuries A.D. We find them at Smyrna (with a cult of Dionysos Βρεισεύς), Ephesos (cult of Demeter and Dionysos Φλέως), Teos (Dionysos Σητάνεις), Magnesia on the Maeander, Seleucia in Cilicia (D. Ἀρχιβάκχος), in Western Thrace (D. Βότρυς), and at Apollonia on the Black Sea. They had much in common with the associations called οἱ Βάκχοι and τὸ Βακχεῖον, which existed in the period at Athens, Megara, Cnidos, Cyzicus, Perinthos, Thasos, and Tomi. Our knowledge of both groups of societies is derived from inscriptions, of which the most important is one found at Athens which contains the statutes of the Iobacchi and the minutes of one of their meetings.²

This curious document gives the most minute information about the

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¹ The inscriptions relating to these and other associations among the Greeks have been collected by Erich Ziebarth, *Das griechische Vereinswesen*, Leipzig 1896. The facts which follow are drawn in the main from this work and from Foucart’s *Associations religieuses*.

EXCAVATIONS OF THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT MELOS. 79

constituent and procedure of a Bacchic society, the election of members, entrance-fees and subscriptions, the duties of the officers, the meetings at which the members drank wine in the Society's banqueting hall, and the strict rules which were found necessary for the preservation of order.

The Mystae of Melos honoured their hierophant with a portrait-statue. About the same time, early in the third century, τὸ ἱερωτάτου νέου Βάκχου of Thasos paid a similar compliment to their hierophant. We also hear of a hierophant in connection with the Mystae of Ephesus and of Magnesia. The fact that at Cyzicicos the names of the hierophant and the μυστάρχης, followed by those of the Mystae, appear in a list of public officers, shows that there at any rate they occupied a prominent position. The officers and many of the members of these societies were persons of good birth and standing. In many cases women were admitted to membership and to office. The βάκχοι of Tomi are called Πασοῦ ἱερὸς θιασός, apparently after their foundress. There is nothing unlikely in the assumption that the rich lady whose ἐργον is mentioned on her bust (Fig. 8) was a member or even an officer of the Melian Mystae.

The inscription on that bust raises a new point of some interest; it reveals the existence within the society of a body called οἱ περιβώμοι. We might suppose that these were members who had attained a higher stage of initiation, privileged perhaps to take part in some sacrifice or choric dance περὶ βωμὸν. But the inscriptions which give so full an account of the organisation of these societies say nothing of such a subdivision. On the other hand we find constant mention of a throng of functionaries, who bear a great variety of names. The Iobacchi had six officials, the Mystae of Magnesia five. The Βουκόλοι, a Bacchic society of Pergamon, had an ἄρχιβουόκολος, a secretary, two singing-masters, three Sileni and a choragos.1 The height of extravagance is reached by the Mystae of Apollonia on the Black Sea, whose eight officers bear names suggestive of the cult of Zagreus and of the Trieteric festival that was celebrated on Parnassus and Cithaeron and in Crete. The Mystae of Dionysos Trieterikos in Melos may also have had their λυκαφάρος and κρατηράρχος, their ἄρχιβασσάρα and κισταφόρος. By οἱ περιβώμοι we should probably understand the whole body of officers. This interpretation may help to explain the only passage where the word occurs in classical literature. Juvenal (ii. 16) describes a man of infamous life, evidently a well-known character, under the name of Peribomius. There is a scholion, Peribomius: nomen archigalli. If the person referred to was a priest of Cybele, and if, as our inscription suggests, περιβῶμοι was a general title for the functionaries attached to Asiatic cults, the name chosen by the satirist conveys just the discreet hint which might be expected.

The discovery of the hall in which the Mystae held their meetings is an

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1 The twelve priests mentioned as conducting a Dionysiac festival in Patmos, in a passage quoted by Maass, Orpheus, p. 52, from the Acts of John, were probably the officers of an association of μύσται of βάκχοι. This description by a hostile writer shows us a Bacchic society at its worst, just as the rules of the Iobacchi show one at its best.
important addition to our knowledge of these associations. Such halls are mentioned in inscriptions under the names oikía, oικος, or ἱερόν. Its resemblance in general plan to the Hall of the Iobacchi at Athens (p. 65, note 1) confirms the view already expressed as to the similar character of the societies of μῦσται and βάκχοι.

The building remained in use for a considerable time, so long that in several places the mosaic became worn; instead of being repaired or renewed it was roughly patched with bits of marble wall-lining. Judging from the fact that on Roman provincial sites it is not uncommon to find traces of three or more tessellated pavements one above another, we may estimate the probable life-time of such a floor at from 100 to 150 years. There is no reason to suppose that the building was ever converted to other uses; had that been the case the statue of the hierophant would not have remained unmolested in its niche, still less have been left in fragments on the floor. It looks as if in the course of the fourth century the meeting-place of the Mystae was first neglected, then deserted, lastly stripped of its marble fittings. The removal of the stylobate slabs which formed its socket would naturally occasion the fall of the statue; it was pushed on to the pavement and lay there, broken by careless hands, but not mutilated by the spite of fanatics as were the torsos discovered in the Three Churches excavation (J. H. S. xvii. p. 131). Later the collapse of the roof buried it in fallen plaster. Last of all the construction upon the ruins of a broad cultivation-terrace preserved to our own day both the statue and the finest part of the pavement.

The head and body of the hierophant are still separated. It is to be hoped that the authorities of the Athens Museum will not neglect the opportunity of securing the body, which remains at Melos in the warehouse of the proprietor of the site. By so doing they will double the value of the head which they already possess and add to their collection a new type of the highest interest.

I have to thank Mr. Duncan Mackenzie, my colleague in the excavation, for a number of valuable suggestions.

R. C. Bosanquet.
PART OF FIFTH PANEL, RESTORED.