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The JMR (Journal of Mosaic Research) is an international journal on mosaics, annually published by the Bursa Uludağ University Mosaic Research Center. The aim of this journal is to serve as a forum for scientific studies with critical analysis, interpretation and synthesis of mosaics and related subjects. The main matter of the journal covers mosaics of Turkey and other mosaics related to Turkey mosaics. Besides, the journal also accommodates creative and original mosaic researches in general. Furthermore, together with articles about mosaics, the journal also includes book presentations and news about mosaics.

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Bu dergideki makalelerde kullanılacak olan kısaltmalar Alman Arkeoloji Enstitüsü yayın kuralları, Bulletin de l'Association internationale pour l'Etude de la Mosaïque antique, AIEMA - AOROC 24.2016, La Mosaïque Gréco Romaine IX ve Der Kleine Pauly dikkate alınarak yapılmıştır.

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José María Blázquez Martínez in memoriam (1926-2016)

José María Blázquez Martínez (Professor of Ancient History and Fellow of the Spanish Royal Academy of History) passed away on March 26, 2016, in the city of Madrid (Spain) after a full life devoted to teaching, scientific research and the spread of antiquity; and leaving all of us -who have had the immense fortune to enjoy his mastership and overwhelming personality-, with an immense sadness.

Prof. Blázquez graduated in Philosophy and Letters from the University of Salamanca in 1951 and defended his PhD in the Complutense University of Madrid in 1956. During the next decade, Prof. Blázquez continued his training under the supervision of Prof. Pallottino at the University of La Sapienza in Rome and, granted by the DAAD, at the University of Marburg, under the supervision of Prof. Matz and Prof. Drerup. Subsequently he made other successful research stays at the University of Tel Aviv, the British Academy of Rome, the University of Catania, and in the German Archaeological Institute branches at Istanbul, Damascus and Riyadh. In this regard, Prof. Blázquez always defended the importance of international networks that, through academic contact with other schools and colleagues, conceived as essential for personal development and the progress of scientific research.



After this intense formative period, José María Blázquez obtained a position as Professor of Ancient History at the University of Salamanca (1966-) and shortly after at the Complutense de Madrid (1969-), where he was designated as Professor Emeritus. At the same time, he was an active member of the former Institute of Archaeology "Rodrigo Caro" (CSIC), that he directed during more than ten years (1973-1985). Finally, in recognition to his academic trajectory, Professor Blázquez was elected as a Fellow of the Spanish Royal Academy of History. In all these institutions Prof. Blázquez developed a brilliant contribution to the promotion of Ancient History in Spain, especially important was his capacity for mentoring (he supervised more than 40 PhDs during his academic life) large teams of teachers and researchers, that obtained several tenured positions in different universities and academic institutions. He was also a prolific author publishing many handbooks and monographs that are authentic milestones in history the Spanish scholarship (i. e. *La Romanización, Historia social y económica. La España Romana. Economía de la Hispania romana*, Bilbao, 1978, *Historia de España Antigua, I. Protohistoria*, Madrid, 1980; *Historia de España Antigua II. Hispania romana*, Madrid, 1978). Largely influential was also his leadership in the direction of the scientific journals as *Archivo Español de Arqueología* (1973-1987) and *Gerión* (1983-2010). In addition, Prof. Blázquez directed numerous archaeological excavations at Caparra (Cáceres), Cástulo (Jaén), La Loba (Fuenteovejuna, Córdoba), and in the Monte Testaccio (Rome).

By virtue of its training and its wide perspective, Prof. Blázquez's research trajectory was the reflection of the scientist dedicated to the study of antiquity, with a masterful management of

diverse written and archaeological sources, always connected with current intellectual debates of all social and human sciences. During his career published more than 37 books, acting of editor in other 9 monographs. He also published 234 articles in the most prestigious, both Spanish and International, scientific journals and several chapters in collective volumes. His research interests covered multiples areas on the study of antiquity: the Phoenician and Greek colonization of the Western Mediterranean, the Late Iron Age communities of the Iberian Peninsula, the study of Pre-Roman religions, the Impact of primitive Christianity in the Late Roman Empire, and, of course, the ancient economy of Roman Spain, with an special focus on the exports of *Baetican* olive oil.

Finally, we would like to highlight his research on Roman mosaics, whose first publication dates from 1975 - "Arte y Sociedad en los mosaicos del Bajo Imperio" [Art and Society in the mosaics of the Late Roman Empire] *Bellas Artes* 75, 1975, pp. 18-25 -soon followed by- "Mosaicos romanos del Bajo Imperio" [Roman mosaics of the Late Empire], *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 50-51, 1977, pp. 269-293., In this regard, Prof. Blázquez continued the a research line previously initiated by his teacher Prof. Antonio García y Bellido. Since 1976 to 1996, Prof. Blázquez promoted and directed the Corpus of Mosaics of Spain, within the framework of the international project sponsored by the AIEMA. Through this monumental labor, Prof. Blázquez contributed to establish the study of Roman mosaics as an authentic sub-discipline in the field of the Spanish Classical archaeology.

The obtention of several I+D Research projects, funded in competitive calls by the Spanish Ministry of Science (acting as Principal Investigator from 1976 to 1997) and an International Project of the Joint Hispanic-American Committee, with the University of West-Lafayette, Purdue (Indiana-USA), allowed Prof. Blázquez to create a permanent research team on the study of Roman mosaics. This team, which I (Prof. Neira Jiménez) am honored of have been part, managed the realization of the above mentioned *Corpus de Mosaicos de España* (CME), a work continued afterwards by its dear colleague, Dr. Guadalupe López Monteagudo (CSIC). In addition to the publication of 12 volumes of the CME, he presented numerous papers on the Hispanic, African and Near Eastern Roman mosaics in the most prestigious conferences on these topics, such as the International Congresses organized by the AIEMA or *L'Africa romana* conference, organized by the Centro di Studi sull'Africa Romana of the Università degli studi di Sassari, as well as in countless courses and seminars in other institutions and universities, such as the Roman Mosaic Seminar of the UC3M, to which he attended every year, without missing any of the 9 editions celebrated.

Prof. Blázquez was a firm believer in the work developed by AIEMA, having been named member of Honor of this scientific association. He also formed part of the editorial board of the Journal of Mosaic Research, where he published various articles, and presented papers in both the 11th International Colloquium on Ancient Mosaics, held in Bursa on 2009, and in the 5th Colloquium of AIEMA Turkey, held in Kahramanmaraş on 2011. Prof. Blázquez was a true lover of Turkey.

Prof. Blázquez was an unavoidable reference in the international scholarship on ancient mosaics, many colleagues who share our pain remember his vitality even in the XIII. AIEMA Congress held in Madrid on September 2015, where he gave the inaugural conference. As a testimony of his enthusiasm for the study of ancient mosaics, he was already thinking of traveling to the next AIEMA Congress scheduled for 2018 in Cyprus. Proof of his infinite generosity, he prepared

tirelessly until the end of his days a text on Diana in the mosaics of Roman Spain for X SMR, held in September 2016 at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

His decisive contribution to the study of antiquity has earned him numerous recognitions from many international academic institutions and associations: Fellow of German Archaeological Institute (1968), Board member of the L'Association Internationale d'Epigraphie grecque et latine (AIEGL), Member of the Hispanic Society (1974); Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Archaeology of Bologna (1980), Fellow of the Spanish Royal Academy of History (1990), Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences (1993), Fellow of the Academia Nazionale dei Lincei (1994), Fellow of the Fine Arts Academy of Santa Isabel de Hungría (Seville) (1995), Fellow of the Real Academia de Bones Letres de Barcelona (1997), or Fellow of the Académie de Aix-en-Provence (1999), among others. He also received many prizes as the Franz Cumont prize from the Académie Royale de Belgique (1985), the Great Silver medal of Archaeology from l'Académie d'Architecture de Paris (1987), or the Cavalli d'Oro prize from Venice (2003). Prof. Blázquez was named *doctor honoris causa* by the universities of Valladolid (1999), Salamanca (2000), Bologna (2001), León (2005), and Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (2015), and received the *Orden del Mérito Civil*, one of the highest recognitions granted by the Spanish govern.

He was a genius as scholar, but also a genial person. For both reasons, colleagues, students, and friends of many countries, that have the fortune of meet Prof. Blázquez during his life, feel a great emptiness for the loss of our dear teacher.

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Şahin
Bursa Uludağ University

Prof. Maria Luz Neira Jiménez
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid



Archaeology / Arkeoloji

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Iconography Related to the Mineral-Medicinal Waters in Hispanic Mosaics in Castilla, Aragón and Navarra

Castilla, Aragón ve Navarra'da Yer Alan İspanyol Mozaiklerindeki Mineral-Tıbbi Sularla İlgili İkonografi

Mercedes DURÁN PENEDO*

(Received 31 August 2017, accepted after revision 01 August 2018)

Abstract

This work is dedicated to the memory of Professor José María Blázquez with whom I had a close friendship and whose wise advice helped me to continue my research into the field of mosaics. I will focus on the Hispanic mosaics of Castilla, Aragón and Navarra.

We know that gods invoked in thermal spaces ranged from the nymphs to Apollo, Minerva, Jupiter, Juno, Fortune or, for quite some time, even Bormanicus. The image of Medusa was also regarded as the carrier of healing blood, which was kept in the veins of her right arm, and that would be used by Asclepius in his resurrections. On the other hand, it is not unusual to find mosaics with the image of Medusa associated with the gods of hot springs. Objects such as shells, craterae, jars and jugswere part of its symbolic repertoire, which is, in turn, an inexpensive way to represent otherwise more elaborate motifs. In Hispania the said associations are traces of former pre-Roman cults, which would later syncretise with those beliefs imposed by the Roman civilisation.

The fact that the higher concentration of mosaics displaying craterae, shells, etc. are located at specific enclaves where waters can be often found in situ or not far from the location led us also to believe that there is a connection between the ornamental motifs of mosaics and the curative waters. It will be through this analysis that we will clarify this approach.

Keywords: Mosaic, iconography, Hispania, healing waters and hydrotherapy.

Öz

Bu çalışma, yakın dostum olan Profesör José María Blázquez'in anısına adanmıştır ve kendisinin bilge tavsiyeleri, mozaikler üzerine yaptığım araştırmalarımı sürdürmeme yardımcı olmuştur. Bu çalışmada Castilla, Aragón ve Navarra'daki İspanyol mozaiklerine odaklanılacaktır.

Termal suların olduğu mekânlarda nympheler, Apollon, Minerva, İupiter, İuno, Fortuna ve hatta bir dönem Bormanicus'tan bile yardım istendiği bilinmektedir. Hatta sağ kolunun damarlarında şifalı kan dolaştığına inanılan Medusa da iyileştirici kanın taşıyıcısı olarak kabul edilmiş, ve bunun, Asklepios tarafından yeniden canlandırmada kullanıldığına inanılmıştır. Öte yandan, kaplıca tanrıları ile beraber tasvir edilmiş Medusa betimli mozaikler bulmak sıra dışı değildir. Örneğin deniz kabuğu, krater, vazo ve sürahi gibi nesnelere sembolik repertuarın birer parçasıydı ve bu da, daha ayrıntılı motiflerin bezemesinin daha ucuz bir yoludur. İspanya'da, söz konusu betimler Roma öncesi kültürlerin izleri olup; bu, daha sonra Roma Uygarlığı'nın getirdiği inançlarla uyumlu hale gelecektir.

Kraterler, kavkılar vb. öğelerin betimlendiği mozaiklerin, yoğunlukla etrafında su bulunan alanlarda ya da mozaiklere çok yakın mesafelerde tespit edildiği belli başlı alanlarda bulunması, mozaiklerde görülen motiflerle

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şifalı sular arasında bir bağlantı olduğunun düşünülmesine sebep olmaktadır. Bu analiz çalışmasında bu yaklaşım açıklığa kavuşturulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Mozaik, ikonografi, İspanya, şifalı sular ve hidroterapi.*

This work is dedicated to the memory of professor José María Blázquez with whom I had a close friendship and whose wise advice helped me to continue my research into the field of mosaics.

José Maria was among the firsts to study the Iberian Protohistorical religiosity, as well as the involvement of many of the indigenous and Roman gods in the healing waters throughout our Peninsula. I believe this to be the best way to pay tribute to his work and his memory.

For some time now I have been interested in this topic and I presented already a paper in September 2016, at the 10th International Seminar on Roman Mosaics: *Los mosaicos de la pars occidentalis. Nuevas perspectivas de estudio*, focused on the iconographic motifs present in those mosaics related to mineral waters across the Spanish Levant.

As already stated on several occasions the healing properties of sulfur and chlorinated water with respect to certain illnesses were found over time, and those who were unaware of the scientific particulars would easily relate its curative power to divine intervention. It was the Greek who instructed the Romans about the principles of medicine and so the god Aesculapius got associated with the Greek god Asclepius.

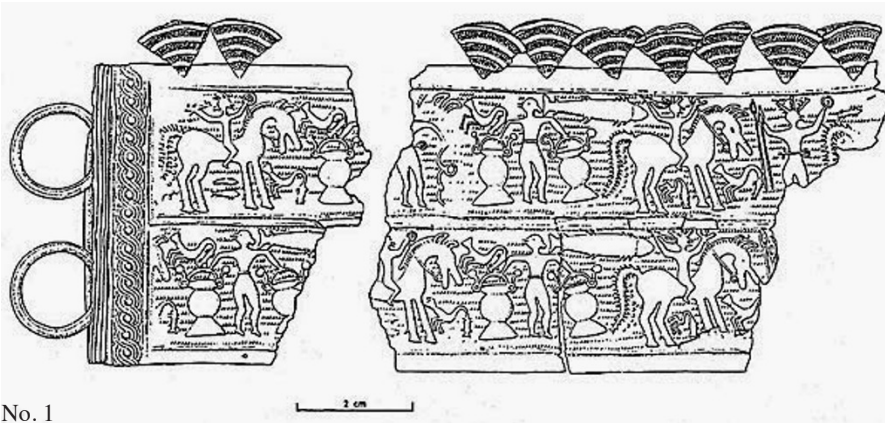
As stated by Pérez (2012: 131-141), there is written record of the curative properties of thermal water either used for baths, vapours or consumption in the works of Hippocrates of Cos, Arataeus of Cappadocia, Celsus, Dioscorides, Herodotus, Soranus, Oribasius, Arquigenes, Rufus, Aetius, Antilos, Celios Aurelius, Alexander of Tralles or even Paul of Aegina, Musa, Vitruvius (VIII) and Plinius (XXXI and XXXI), among many others.

We also know that these waters were collected and transported within a small territorial scope. The 3rd-century BC diadem of Moñes in Piloña (Asturias) and the patera of Otañes in Santander from the 2nd-3rd centuries AD are indeed archaeological testimonies of this reality (Table 1).

We know that gods invoked in thermal spaces ranged from the nymphs to Apollo, Minerva, Jupiter, Juno, Fortune or, for quite some time, even Bormanicus. San Nicolas reminds us that the image of Medusa was also regarded as the carrier of healing blood, which was kept in the veins of her right arm, and that would be used by Asclepius in his resurrections. On the other hand, it is not unusual to find mosaics with the image of Medusa associated with the gods of hot springs. Objects such as shells, craterae, jars and jugs were part of its symbolic repertoire, which is, in turn, an inexpensive way to represent otherwise more elaborate motifs. In Hispania the said associations are traces of former pre-Roman cults, which would later syncretize with those beliefs imposed by the Roman civilization.

When a cratera displays volutes with vine or dyonisiac motives it is usually given a Bacchian connotation. If not, the cratera is often related to an allusion to the garden, as exposed in the work of (San Nicolás 1997: 139) and in the recent case of (López Monteagudo 2015) as they might show volutes, branches and streams of water. Its use in themes of asarotsoikos (Martin - Montilla 2015: 387-389) or as a symbol of good luck (Campbell 1990: 293-300) has been

associated with them too. Through this present work we have been able to verify –and would like to continue to demonstrate– that another connotation should be added, and that is their link with benevolent waters of thermal and minero-medical springs nearby. Let us not forget those that show marine fauna, such as dolphins; these are animales associated with regeneration and transformation, symbolising the benevolent power of waters which would be later adopted by Christianity as a symbol of resurrection.

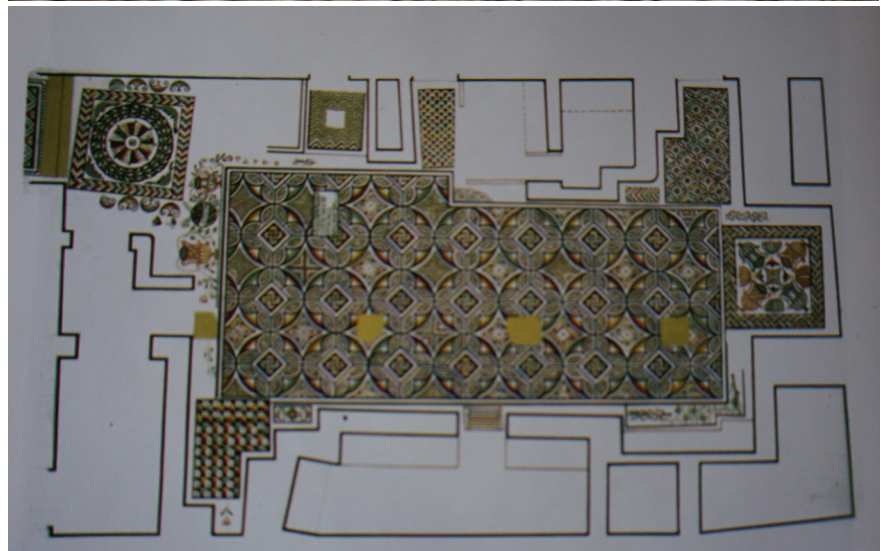


No. 1

No. 2



No. 3



No. 4

Table 1

No.1: The transportation of the sacred waters in the diadem of Moñes (Piloña, Asturias) 3rd-1st centuries BC, source retrieved from free Internet site. **No. 2:** The cicle of the sacred waters in the paddle of Otañes, Santander (centuries 1st - 3rd AD), source retrieved from free Internet site. **No. 3 and No. 4:** Mosaic with craterae, shells and plant at the sanctuary dedicated to Asclepius in Thurburbo Majus. Photograph by A. Ben Abed ben Khader, 1999.

We already saw that the use of craterae relating to protection of health are located in the building devoted to Asclepius in Thuburbo Majus (Ben Abed Khader 1999: 321-334), Tunisia (Table 1) where the combination of motifs with craterae and shells or scallops were the main elements, in addition to being in the frame flanking the inscription of Asclepius Augustus. The said motifs are not only to be found at cult places, but also in some of the housing around the city. Considering the fact that Zaghoun and its Water Temple –built by Hadrian and being the spot where the aqueduct to Carthago departed from- are just 29 km away from Thuburbo Majus, the proliferation of the images of craterae in its mosaics seems to be fairly justified.

The fact that the higher concentration of mosaics displaying craterae, shells, etc. are located at specific enclaves where waters can be often found *in situ* or not far from the location led us also to believe that there is a connection between the ornamental motifs of mosaics and the curative waters. The area of influence of mineral-medicinal waters and the villas with mosaics ranges between 30 and 40 km, since that is considered to be a convenient distance for traveling and transportation in antiquity (Fig. 1).

Starting our tour in Castilla la Mancha, we will stop in the province of Toledo, where two mosaics from the 4th century AD at the Roman villa of Carranque presents motifs and images that lead us to think about the possible relationship with the waters of the area. An iconography related to the nymphs is what is depicted in this case. This cult was widespread in those locations where healing waters had already been used in pre-Roman times, and hence a logical syncretism derives. As stated by Blázquez and García (1992: 21-66), Díez de Velasco (1998) and Oro Fernández (1996: 23-151), among other scholars, this kind of testimonies concentrate especially around the North and West of Hispania, which remained much less romanized, but as new mosaics emerge it gets evident that the process would eventually involve, to a greater or lesser extent, an important part of the Spanish territory.



Figure 1
Map of Spain with the main enclaves of Roman mosaics and healing waters in Castile, Aragon and Navarre.
Map by the author.

There are several enclaves with thermal waters and dedications to the nymphs which had the purpose of thanking them for their curative powers, and we suppose that this fact influenced as well the owners of the houses when reflecting these motives on their mosaics.

The villa of Carranque, currently considered as a palatial building, includes an ensemble of mosaics with the iconography of the nymphs. The mosaic of the Metamorphosis depicts the nymphs accompanying Diana, the nymphs along side Hilar, Anymone the nymph surprised by Eros riding a horse, Priam and Tisbe, Hercules, Artemis, and Athena, all of them surrounding the goddess Venus. These motives are directly related to the healing and medicinal waters, as we see in Oro Fernández (1996: 125 et seq.) and so it is not surprising that we may also find allusions to seawater in the image of Oceanus. One of the geometric mosaics with a circular emblem presents containers with fruits and branches at its corners. Along the frame there are two craterae with vegetal ornamental motifs. In another mosaic there are sea shells in semicircular lunettes. Other mosaics of the ensemble would depict Achilles and Briseida or the fight between Adonis and the boar in front of Venus and Mars.

All in all, a complete set of ornamental elements where the interest of the owner for highlighting the value given to waters as a source of life, health and wealth is clear.

Underground aquifers such as those of Arroyo de la Cabeza with Fuente de Pobo, Guadarrama River and Fuente de Tejada, are other elements which help us understand the ensemble. In this case, though, there is no location of medicinal mineral waters in less than 40 km. We suppose the owner intended to make a reference to the world of waters from a globalizing perspective. Also in Toledo, the town of Saucedo in Talavera la Nueva offers the mosaic of Iscallis carrying a cratera, as well as another mosaic with five other craterae (Canto 2001: 111 et seq.) (Castelo et al. 2004: 187-212), currently kept in the Museo de la Santa Cruz in Toledo.

According to A. Canto the Saucedo had a sacred character ever since antiquity and there it also appeared an altar dedicated to the nymphs and a votive epigraph dedicated to the indigenous goddess Alla, Allia, Alles. Although the medicinal properties of these waters are unknown, the villa offers a decorative ensemble that includes craterae, dolphins and Neptune's trident. Iscallis would be a divinity related to fertility and wealth of waters. López Monteagudo (2009: 597-635) also agrees with A. Canto in the idea that it also relates to the curative waters of the area. The attributes that it carries, cornucopia, globe and cratera along with the four craterae at the corners reinforce this interpretation.

The wide distance between Carranque and Saucedo, 88 km, makes us discard a possible influence of this water in Carranque.

Cuenca offers an extraordinary set of mosaics in Noheda. We will not elaborate on the mosaics of the rectangular room with mythological and allegorical themes (Fernández Galiano 2010: 111-142), where iconographic variety, interpretive originality and great artistic quality are combined. For this author the building could be destined to a religious community. Focusing on the topic we are dealing with, in the octagonal room that communicates with the room with three apses and on a surface of 24.35 m², we find a mosaic surrounded by interlaced acanthus scrolls, finished with lotus flowers.

On the surface of the tapestry, there are 8 rows of craterae joined by garlands, alternating with plant stems topped by lotus flowers. The craterae vary in shades,

one row is black and the next is red, while yellow tiles appear in both combinations to indicate the decoration (Table 2). The profusion and multiplication of this motif is certainly exceptional, with 56 evident containers and some more in the damaged area, but they are also painted on the stucco of walls, which makes its religious functionality of particular relevance. This site is located 29 km away from the spa resort of Valdeganga with ferruginous waters good for arthritis, rheumatism, etc. and which is currently abandoned. Just 38 km away there is the town of Beteta and its famous waters of Solan de Cabras, recognized since the 18th century, and it is very likely that their qualities were also known in antiquity.



No. 1

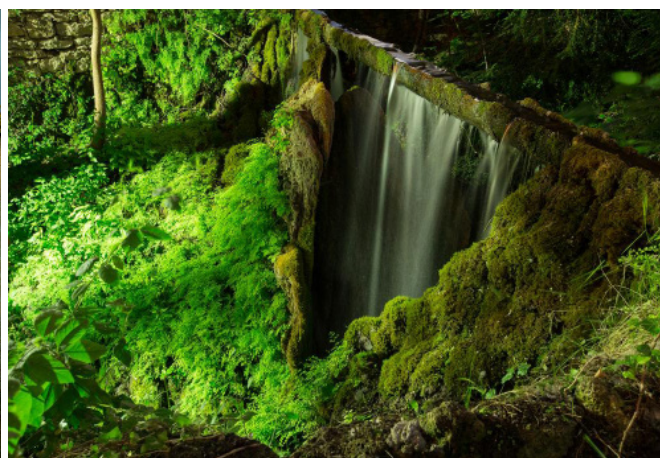
Table 2

No. 1: Mosaic with craterae and vegetal ornamentation in the octagonal room of Noheda, Cuenca. Photograph courtesy of M. A. Valero, today abandoned.

No. 2: Balneario de Solan de Cabras at 38 km from Noheda. **No. 3:** Balneario de Valdeganga at 28 km from Noheda.



No. 2



No. 3

In the autonomous community of Madrid, the site of Complutum, now Alcalá de Henares, offers the late-Severian mosaic of Achilles and Penthesilea (Blázquez et al. 1989: 12 et seq., 1-7). Among the various motifs included in the boxes surrounding the central panel there are two types of craterae, which have been represented up to four times, even if today only two are preserved. D. Fernández Galiano (1984: 11-89 fig.1 láms. I-LVIII) links them to Dionysian motifs that also appear as the lioness, goat, tragic mask or head of Silenus among others. However, the fact that these craterae do not show the elements of grapes or the branches of vine, raises doubts as to whether the two craterae arranged next to the Medusa motif are actually referring to the fertilizing and protective waters. This association can be seen in the mosaic of Calle del Reloj in Valencia too. In fact, Achilles acquires his protection in the waters of the Stygian lagoon and it could be a symbolic reference to their benefactor power.

At a distance of 27 km from Complutum, the medicinal waters of Carabaña can be found, with a wide healing tradition and which were already commercialised at the beginning of the 20th century. The spa is currently operating. In Carabaña, part of a Roman road communicating with nearby cities, such as Complutum, has been preserved. These natural waters are purgative for containing sulfate of soda, purifying due to calcium chloride and antiseptic for its sodium sulfate, and they were therefore highly appreciated by all populations that inhabited these place.

Next we will stop in the province of Avila, specifically in the villa of S. Pedro del Arroyo, in the estate of Vergeles, where a mosaic depicting the story of Meleager was discovered in 2006. The angles contain four craterae from which ornamental plant elements arise, also mixed with terrestrial animals. We can not specify any more data since its excavation continues and relevant studies are in progress. Nevertheless, we can confirm that in an area less than 30 km around, there are several medicinal fountains long appreciated. The one of Our Lady of the Parral is at 16 km, good for dermatological problems; the one of San Juan de Olmos at 25 km along with the chapel, associated to fertility; or the fountain La Salud ("Health") in the term of Narrillos de Rebollar.

Focusing on Castilla León, we will stop in the province of Salamanca where the mosaic with the bath of Pegasus and the nymphs was found in S. Julián de Valmuza (Blázquez 1982: 19 n°12 fig.12), dating back to the 4th century. Only a drawing of it is conserved in the Real Academy of the History. A nymph rides Pegasus and crowns him with laurel; another nymph feeds him and another one tidies him up from behind.

The Ledesma resort is 27 km away from this site. Currently operating, its medicinal waters are recommended for the respiratory and locomotor systems, and to heal neurological affections. At a distance of 30 km, the baths of Babilafunete have a long tradition and are highly appreciated for chronic conditions of the digestive, urinary, locomotor and respiratory systems. Even further, 54 km away, the resort of Retortillo was already known in the Roman era, and a votive ara was found at the place.

There is only one single geometric mosaic with craterae at the angles in Zamora, dated from the 4th century and located in the village of Requejo in Santa Cristina de la Polvorosa, which today is kept at the Provincial Museum of Zamora (Blázquez 1993: 480-487). In this case, the spas of Calabor and Almeida are too far away from this village and so they would not have had as much influence as at other spots.

In the province of León, we can find an interesting contribution in the villa of Quintana del Marco of the 4th century, with the theme of Hylas and the nymphs (Blázquez 1986; Mañanes 1989: 131-144) discovered in 1899 and currently in the Museum of San Marcos de Leon. Unfortunately, we do not have much data about this villa; we do know that a silver oval plate with the text Marti / Teleno was found, which J. Mangas (1996: 483-490) interprets as a syncretism of the Roman god Mars and the indigenous Teleno, a direct reference to Mount Teleno. This mount is an important landmark between Orense and South-West León. In this site an important hydraulic complex was built and it was used during the gold explorations of the Medulas and therefore it is very possible that this village had close links with the mining activity of its neighbors.

The thermal areas are too far away to constitute an influence area, and that is why we point out the possibility of the influence of Mount Teleno in this specific case.

Table 3

No. 1: Mosaics of the village of Almenara de Adaja, Valladolid: Pegasus “toilette” by the nymphs. **No. 2** and **No. 3:** Ornamental and geometric mosaics with multiple craterae. Photograph by Manteca in Garcia - Sanchez 2015. **No. 4:** The Spa of Olmedo at 8 km from Almenara d’Adaja.



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4

In Palencia we can mention the villa of Quintanilla de la Cueva, from the 3rd-4th centuries (Garcia Guinea 1986). The varied iconographic ensemble is in honor of the water with fishes, Oceans and seasons, Neptune or the allegory of a river and Amphitrite. And the fragment of a mosaic with a cratera and a bird, that is conserved in the Museum of Palencia. The waters that we find in Saldaña 25 km away, of medicinal tradition like the ones from Fuente de los Calores next to Villorquite of the Páramo which is only 10 km away from La Olmeda, or the waters of Villa la Fuente, could be the reference for the ensemble of mosaics. Nonetheless, without proper archaeological documentation and waiting for future revisions, we just dare to point at this possible influence.

Another important set to be noted is the villa of La Olmeda in Pedrosa de la Vega, from the 4th century, with the splendid mosaic of Achilles in the gynoeceum of Lycomenes in Skiros (Mangas 1996: 146-156; Durán 2010-2012: 1314). Located at the oecus, it presents on its border a portrait gallery of the family that inhabited the villa. These portraits are placed between pairs of mallards facing amphorae and vegetal cumbos all forming part of a symbology related to the prosperity of nature provided both by the fresh water of the mallards and the healing water that is collected in the amphorae. All elements are linked to each other by filaments which also attach to the portraits. The rest of the decorative mosaics depict hunting scenes and geometric themes, dated between the 4th-5th centuries AD. It is not surprising that in this place, just 6 km away from Saldaña and with an area of influence of various springs of mineral-medicinal waters, the owners of this village would want to reflect their wishes of prosperity and long life for the members of the family.

In the province of Valladolid and in the chronological framework of the 4th century, we must mention the town of Almenara de Adaja (Neira - Mañanes 1998: 13-34), which conforms a very interesting decorative mosaic ensemble (Table 3), where four rooms present craterae and a scene of the "toilette" of Pegasus and the nymphs. In the room with a pentagonal head, there is a cratera at the threshold from which a lotus flower and pods with acanthus leaves and four-leaf flowers emerge. Throughout the rest of the area geometric and vegetal motifs alternate. Another mosaic which contains the cratera is the one with the four circular garlands: at the threshold the cratera with emerging tendrils that end up the shape of four-petal flowers can be admired. Once in the rectangular room, there are four large squares framed by five-leaf laurel garlands. In the four isosceles triangles resulting from the presence of a square on the tip inside another, four galled craterae are represented with emerging lush acanthus leaves and pellets on the sides.

The mosaic of the room finished in exedra displays a great cratera with pods and acanthus leaves and tendrils with leaves and four-lobed flowers. In the rest of the room, at the corners, we find similar craterae to that of the exedra. It is also remarkable that vegetal scrolls frame another square which has craterae at its angles, and from which acanthus leaves emerge, fairly geometrized in this case. Finally, at the tri-apsed room in one of the exedrae, there is a square which contains craterae with emerging tendrils at its angles, again in a geometrized fashion.

All this ensemble is complemented with the mosaic with fish, the one with vegetal and geometric motifs, and the great composition of the octagonal room with the "toilette" of Pegasus. On this mosaic, the nymphs clean a wingless Pegasus up with two large jars on the sides. The scene is completed with the representation of the fountain of Hippocrene and Mount Helicon at the top of it,

which is a direct connection to fresh waters of fountains and springs.

To this artistic set fully linked to the cult of water, we should add that just 8 km away the spring of "Sancti Spiritus" with the Olmedo resort fully operating nowadays. This presents hyperthermal waters of 22°C of strong mineralization, useful for the rheuma, the skin, the locomotor apparatus, etc. We consider all this enough evidence to prove the influence of these waters in the use of symbolic motifs in the decorative ensemble of the mosaics in this villa, which is also placed in the road communicating with the villa of Cauca (present Coca) at 15 km.

Another interesting thermal location, also in the area of influence that would affect the villa, would be that of Las Salinas de Medina del Campo, at 22 km from Adaja Almenara, with waters rich in sodium chloride, calcium and sulfates and thus recommended for arthritis, the respiratory system, skin, etc.

A set that we must also mention is that of the villa of Prado (Table 4) (Neira - Mañanes 1998: 47 et seq., 21, 22 and 24 figs. 8-9 lines 31-40), located in a neighborhood of Valladolid and therefore distant from Olmedo and Medina del Campo, at about 41 km. Despite the great distance, we believe that this villa can be included in the area of influence of those medicinal sites, given that in its repertoire of mosaics at the apsed room it appears the theme of Diana with the seasons and seven craterae, two in the tapestry and five, lined at the opposite end of the apse, combined with floral motifs, clovers, etc. In addition, there is the quadrangular mosaic of craterae that recalls the scheme of the compass. Four more craterae are represented at the angles, from which four laurel wreaths emerge and, being in a semicircular shape, they also frame four other craterae from which leaves of acanthus emerge. The motif is represented eight times in total and, without undermining the high level of ornamentation they involved, this ornamental ensemble recalls again the symbology of water as a benefactor element of prosperity, health and wealth. Another apsed room identified by an oecus uses again the same motif of the craterae that are this time located at the angles of the central square, and from which acanthus leaves and lotus flowers emerge. In the center of this square a medallion with a floral wheel is represented, and, at its free angles, there are again craterae with stems of hanging leaves; this adds eight more to the previous ones and make a total of 23 times that the motif is represented in the three rooms. The theme of Diana would also be adequate because, according to E. Oro Fernández (1996: 93) she was worshiped in places with hot springs, as documented in Bande (Orense) and Burguillos (Badajoz). In short, another interesting set linked to water and nature.

In Segovia, an inscription has been located in Duraton by a soldier who consecrates an altar to Fortuna Balnearis (Perea 1997: 51-61), the goddess who protects health and hygiene. The doubt arises as if this mosaic with allegorical bust, headdress with diadem of fruits, cornucopia and with a snake around her throat, could be related to this divinity that was worshipped by the military collective. But she is not represented with the helm and neither the crown of fruits would be appropriate. Near Duraton, at 5 km, we find the fountain of La Salud in Sepulveda. Its waters remain at a constant temperature of 18°C throughout the year and it is a spring of the river Duraton; although not being thermal, the waters have healing properties for skin problems, and it is for this reason that we think of a possible relation with the documented archaeological material.

The province of Burgos offers some mosaics of great interest to document this relationship with healing waters. One of them is the early-imperial mosaic with

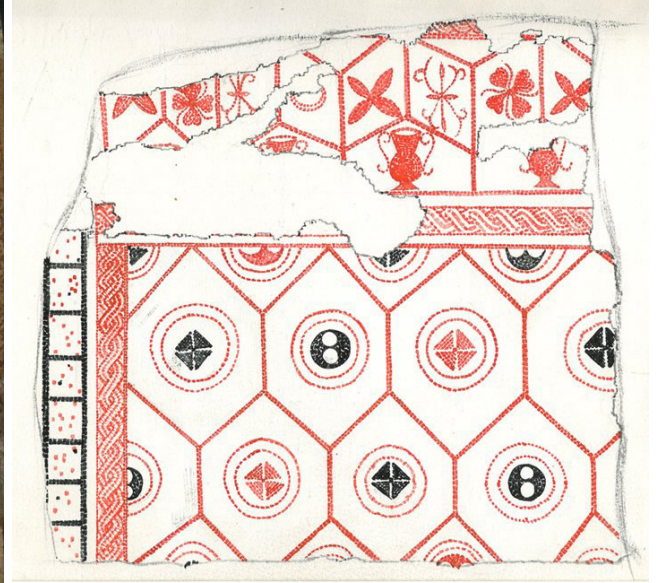
Table 4

- No. 1** and **No. 2:** Mosaics of the villa of Prado in Valladolid, with Diana hunting. Photograph by Neira y Mañanes 1998.
No. 3 and **No. 4:** Geometric mosaics including craterae and vegetal elements from the same villa. Photograph by Neira y Mañanes 1998.
No. 5 and **No. 6:** The spas of Medina del Campo and Olmedo in Valladolid, 40 km away from the villa of Prado.

triton and the fantastic marine fauna in Sasamon (Durán 1993: 70, 254-255 pl. XXXIX). At its edge there is a cratera with acanthus leaves emerging from it, constituting a clear reference to mineral-medical fresh water with beneficial properties for both nature and people and which is also complemented by the benefits of marine water depicted on the central the tapestry.



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 5



No. 6

Segisama (Sasamon) was on the road that communicated with Clunia and Astorga. This favored the circulation of certain motifs such as those that interest us and also, at a distance of 45 km, there is the resort of Valdelateja with waters of curative properties for arthrosis, the respiratory, digestive and circulatory systems, etc. Perhaps this is a relevant element to take into account.

Now, in the city Clunia Sulpicia (Palol 1994) (Table 5) we find several mosaics in whose iconography craterae are also included. It is represented as a central motif in the house no. 3 (López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 68 et seq fig. 18 lines 25 and 48) in room no. 8 from the 2nd century, globally appearing up to twelve times. Another relevant motif at this site is the venera or scallop, symbol of Venus. This is very useful for the architectural exedras, specifically in the room no. 9, currently "in situ". There it is used in the mosaic with secant circles and pseudoemblema (López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 54 et seq. lams. 23 and 45) of mid-2nd century. Another mosaic of the same chronology is the one known as the "the one with scallops" (López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 62 et seq. 48) in room no. 1, where a border of vegetal scrolls frames a quadrangular composition with semicircles on the sides and quarters of circle at the ends. A circle frames the central octagon and at one end stands the part corresponding to an exedra, also decorated with the seashell.

Table 5
No. 1 to No. 4: Mosaics with craterae and scallops in the city of Clunia. Photograph by the author. **No. 5:** Roman cave waters in situ under the city.



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 5

In the spa area of Los Arcos I, we find it again in a bichrome mosaic at the threshold (López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 78 et seq. 23 lám. 28), from the mid-2nd century too, currently in situ and in the mosaic of “scallop with eagle” (López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 77 fig. 23 pl. 49) (Chevalier cit by López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 78) at the center. The bird is identified with the sun, from which light and heat comes, currently occupying a part of room no. 18.

The motif of shells has also a large repercussion on the Portuguese mosaics analyzed, along with other aquatic motifs by C. Mourao (2008), as we see in “Casa de los Rapouxos” and the “House of Skeletons” of Conimbriga, which has shells and craterae along the edge. In Rabaçal (Penela) there are dolphins drinking from a cratera or in Rio Maior Santarem with the use of the shell. From these facts, it is understandable that a symbolic element associated with goddess Venus protecting medicinal waters is used in certain places linked directly or indirectly with them.

Returning to Clunia, we will say that this city is based on an important karstic formation with lagoons of underground water and that have been named Roman Cave. Through wells and fountains they would supply water to the city and they are believed to have been beneficial at those times as a mud therapy treatment, since inside the cave phallic votive offerings and clay masks have been found, which could be related to a magical-religious sanctuary related to Priapo. Up to forty inscriptions have been located and several of them make reference to the “Matres”. These were divinities related to fertility, prosperity, health and life, and were linked to the healing power of the waters (Blázquez 1961: 129-130; Gómez 1999: 425; Gallego 2004: 69-89).

Without moving from Burgos, and with a late chronology of the 5th century, we would like to note the Dionysian mosaic of Baños de Valdearados, unfortunately partly expelled, wherein the frame of the lower panel with the Triumph of Dionysus, two craterae with gallons are represented with acanthus scrolls emerging in which birds intermingle and which, in turn, frame the busts of its owners. We believe that, in this case, the craterae would be associated with the benefactor powers of the waters. On the other hand, in the upper panel, we find another strip with gallonated craterae and vegetable scrolls with grape clusters, clearly alluding to wine. Therefore, in this mosaic both elements, wine and water, combine, being the most appreciated by its owners.

In order to finish with this decorative ensemble of the house, in room no. 5, sector B, a quadrangular mosaic (López Monteagudo et al. 1998: 18 et seq fig. 4 lám. 4) was arranged with concentrically arranged octagons. There is a central circle and in the inter-circular space eight shields of which two are decorated with craterae, one with gallons and the other with horizontal stripes. Another room showed a decoration of birds and terrestrial animals that were combined with craterae (Table 6).

This site, located on the Bañuelos river, was part of the Antonine itinerary Ab Asturica per Cantabriam Caeraugustam (Calvo 2003: 1-9) and it was only 15 km away from the city of Clunia. It is therefore not surprising that the influence of the waters of Cluniae Clunia, is here similarly reflected.

Arriving in the province of Soria, although there are no documented thermal areas, there are multiple springs with hydrogen sulfite waters of therapeutic properties (Yelamos - Sanz 1994: 215-228). It is therefore not surprising that we find mosaics with decorative motifs related to these waters in Medinacelli, such as the one of San Pedro Sq that can be admired in situ. The preserved fragment

presents a semicircular shell composition, symbol of Venus, and in one of the squares the helmet allusive to Mars, both being gods of the hot springs. It has been dated between the 1st-2nd centuries. Another mosaic, this one from the 4th century, is the one of the Plaza Mayor de Medinaceli with Ceres in the emblem and surrounded by the Winds, cratera, dolphin, feline-panther and a fantastic animal, along with other characters confronted. In this case, Ceres-Abundance is surrounded by propitiatory elements such as the marine waters with the dolphin and medicinal terrestrial animals with the cratera, all with Dionysiac elements such as felines. It is possible that the use of these motifs was related to the existence of Fuente de los Baños in Fuencaliente, not far from Medinaceli, at 4 km. Its sulfurous water is known to have healing properties in affections of the skin and of the stomach.

Table 6
 Villa in Baños de Valdearados, Burgos.
No. 1: Mosaic with the Triumph of Dionysus. **No. 2:** Mosaic with female portraits, terrestrial fauna and cratera in the rhomboidal interspaces **No. 3:** Mosaic with shields and craterae. Photograph by the author. **No. 4:** The waters of Clunia are 15 km away.



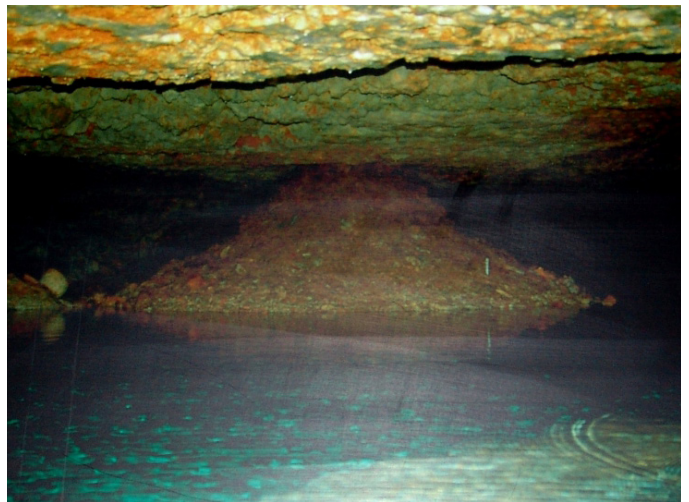
No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4

Following in the province of Soria, we will mention the mosaic of Uxama (Cabré 2015) from the 4th century, excavated in 1913 at an unknown location, showing a cratera between gryphons that could symbolize the protection they exert on beneficial waters, in addition to other mosaics that also depict craterae very similar to those found in Clunia or Astorga. As J.M. Blázquez and M.P. García (Blázquez - García 1992: 33) state, in Uxama there were pre-Roman cults documented, which worshiped the indigenous god of thermal springs Bormanico, and therefore it is not surprising that these cults were extended into the Roman world through syncretism.

It is be at the center of Burgo de Osma, 1.6 km away from Uxama, and under the old University of Santa Catalina, where hypothermal mineral water rich in calcium bicarbonates and very advisable for rheumatic problems, diuretic and hypocholesterolemia were located, that could have been used already in antiquity and which is currently exploited by a spa. In fact, just few kilometers next to Gormaz Castle there is the most important aquifer in the province.

Finally, and within the possible scope of influence of the waters of Burgo de Osma, there is the town of the Dehesa de Cuevas de Soria at 38 km, which shows an interesting set of geometric mosaics that are musealised and from which we stand out the number VI (Blázquez - Ortega 1983: no. 57 pl. 25). It is a geometric mosaic with a roped-square in which squares are inserted on the tips and cantharoi at the four angles, with handle of double scroll from which vegetal rolls of leaves of acanthus emerge. Again the symbolism is repeated.

Leaving the area of Castile, we will focus our analysis on Aragón (Table 7) and we will stop in Zaragoza, where a mosaic whose main motif is a cratera with birds drinking and with vegetable scrolls emerging from it was located at the House of the Cratera in Torrenueva St no. 4-6, dated from the 2nd century, and that is currently in the Museum of Zaragoza. In the same museum there is also another mosaic with a geometric pattern based on squares in which another is inserted at the tip and forming a star, that in turn presents a circle in its interior. At the four angles there are four gallonatedcraterae with plant scrolls extending across the surface.

With regard to the relationship of these mosaics with curative sprigs in Zaragoza, there were several of them mentioned at the recently held exhibition "The curative fountains of Zaragoza", in 2013 (Iturbe - Ruiz 2013): Agua Fita Santa Fe, Fuente de la Junquera; Source of the Tile and source of Health, all four in the axis of the river Huerva. Salina de Mediana limiting with Mediana, source of the Berro in the left margin and Pozo San Miguel in the border of the Gállego river. All this clearly illustrates that the area is full of well-known springs which may have been known from antiquity.

In Tarazona, specifically in Tudela St no. 13 (Bona - Nuñez 1983: 63-83), a geometric mosaic of the mid 3rd century was located, which consisted of secant circles forming four petals and in one of the ends a strip with a central cratera and a gryphon on each side, interweaved by their tails. These are protective elements and specifically in Tarazona there is the medicinal spring of Ojo de San Juan with waters good for paralysis, external oropharynx secretions, hemorrhoids, etc.

We know according to M. Beltran and J. A. Paz (Beltran - Paz 2014: 48) that Augustus attended this sacred spa which is believed to be of Turiaso (Tarazona) under the invocation of the nymph Silbis and that he was miraculously healed. Turiaso's coins reflect that healing. It is believed that Augustus deposited in the sanctuary a votive offering, which has not arrived to our days, and it seems that this aquatic sanctuary remained in use until the 3rd century. We do not know whether the spring we have mentioned could correspond to the one of the texts. It certainly is verified that it existed a nymphaeum in which votive offerings were deposited and where a thermal enclosure was built with an associated temple, later to be Christianise in the Middle Ages.

The site of Albalate in Calanda, also in Teruel, contains a room decorated with both a geometric and a figurative mosaic based on terrestrial animals such as a galloping horse, a running wild boar, roaring lioness,



No. 1



No. 3



No. 5

Table 7

No. 1: Mosaic in the domus of the 2nd century cratera. Torrenueva St no. 4-6. Zaragoza. Zaragoza Museum, photograph by the author. **No. 2:** Well of water Fita Santa Fe, Zaragoza. **No. 3:** Mosaic with cratera flanked by gryphons in the domus of the Tudela St in Tarazona, Museo de Turiasso. Photograph by R. Lériida 2008. **No. 4:** Spring of Ojo de San Juan in Tarazona. **No. 5** and **No. 6:** Mosaics of the villas of Albalate, Calanda, Teruel. Photograph by the author.



No. 2



No. 4



No. 6

standing lion, a galloping mule and a walking leopard. There are also mosaic paved access steps with jars, craterae, a vegetal motif and even two sandals, all aligned on a step. In the mosaic on the apsed area of the room, in the upper level of the stairs we observe at the right end of the geometric composition alternating octagons, circles and squares, and in one of the octagons there is a galled cratera, being possible that there would have been another one on the other side that has disappeared. This exhaustive reproduction catches our attention and we believe that they can allude to wine as well as water, but the details of small fish in the mosaic of the lower level of the stairs would confirm this statement. Even if we aware that both elements were mixed in the banquets, we must not forget the symbolism of abundance and health that they involve. This mosaic is currently in the Museum of Teruel and we believe that the proximity of the river Guadalopillo in the area of Calanda had to influence the iconographic use of these motifs.

Regarding the large thermal lake of Alhama de Aragón in Zaragoza, used since antiquity, we can not relate it with the mentioned mosaics since they are too far away from its area of influence.

Finally we will conclude our analysis in Navarre, where important villae offer us several motifs within their iconographic repertoires that we also relate to hot springs.

The villa of Arellano (Mezquiriz 2003: 238) (Table 8) presents amongst its iconographic repertoire of mosaics the Weddings of Attis, Farewell of Adonis, Muses, or the Birth of Attis at the cubiculum. He is the son of Nana the nymph, daughter of god-river Sangarius, who was abandoned by her at the foot of a mountain, and we believe that the one represented is the nymph Nana herself. He is depicted naked, adorned with jewels and holding a necklace or garland in one hand from which a duck and other birds hung, definitely a clear allusion to the aquatic environment. If we add that there are also four craterae at the angles filled with water given the blue shade of the interior, we can make a connection with the waters of fertility and abundance that heal and that were venerated from the Iberian world.

The villa of Ramalete (Blázquez et al. 1985: no. 44 pl. 39) presents an octagonal mosaic in which a circle is inscribed with other smaller circles in it. In the intermediate spaces there are included eight craterae that form part of the whole vegetal ornamentation, from which profuse leaves of acanthus emerge. In the central circle there is a horseman hunting with an inscription allusive to the owner of the town. Another interesting mosaic is that of the galled cratera held by two putti (Mañanes 1999: 557-574), surrounded by a plant circle and with four baskets loaded with fruits at each angle, as well as a vegetal border with large scrolls that enclose the ensemble. This clearly refers to water and nature. Nevertheless, the one flanked by two erotes invites us to think about a possible allusion to the wine that would be produced in the village. In short, water and wine: two fundamental elements for the wealth of the villa.

We will finish our tour in the village of Liedna (Mezquiriz 2004: 327-359), from the 4th century. This one offers a broad repertoire of geometric mosaics among which I will emphasize the one of the gallery 76, with a braided square and with another square of garland of leaves in the center. Inside the central square some vases or cantharoi occupy the angles. Between each of them, three birds and several small vegetal branches. This is a symbology allusive to the benefactor powers of the waters.



No. 1

Table 8

No. 1: Mosaic with the birth of Attis in the villa of Arellano, Navarra, 4th century. Photograph by the author. **No. 2:** Fuente de la Salud in Estella at 4.5 km from Arellano. **No. 3:** Mosaic of the villa of Liedena, 4th century AD, currently in the Museum of Pamplona, photograph by the author. **No. 4:** Mosaic of Dulcitiu in the villa of Ramalete, 4th century AD, photograph by Mezquiriz 1985. **No. 5:** Balneario de Fitero at 20 km from the villa of Ramalete.



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 5

The province of Navarra is well-known for its rich natural springs of water of thermal medicinal ature, and, at 20 km of the town of Ramalete, we find the spa of Fitero that presents Roman archaeological remains and a possible occupation during the Iberic times. Its waters, at 50°C, are mostly recommended for respiratory illness, rheuma and for rehabilitation. They are currently still in use. The villa of Arellano is also under the area of influence of multiple sources around

Estella, just at 7 km. Fuente de la Salud in the valley of Anocibar with properties for dermatological problems, in addition to Fuente de Los Ángeles, three streams of the fountain near the hermitage-cave of San Juan, and in Estarrus there are river immersion rites documented. Besides, we may not forget that at 24 km distance there is the Belascoain spa with waters at 27°C, good for the kidneys, liver and nervous system. 30 km away, the spa Ibero, in use since Roman times, with waters of 20°C strongly mineralized is beneficial for the urinary tract and the digestive apparatus. 33 km away, the spring of Alsasua with sulfurous waters are beneficial too for dermatosis and the nervous system.

With regard to the villa of Liedena, there is the spring of Burlada at 36 km, with its alkaline, saline, sodium bicarbonated waters indicated for gout, liver and kidneys. This water was commercialised until 1939 but today the spring has disappeared under construction works.

Throughout this analysis we can observe that the pattern we have already seen in the area of the Hispanic Levant continues to happen. The interrelation between certain motifs and proximity to mineral-medicinal waters is repeated. Hence, we are increasingly more positive that, apart from the ornamental meaning they could offer, the symbolic intention was very evident.

Following in order of relevance the use of these motifs, we see how the representation of craterae that are not linked to the Dionysian motifs is very frequent and corresponds to 68% of the mosaics studied, which is pointing us the influence and the strong symbolism that they contributed to in relation to the proximity of the sites with beneficial waters. These pieces are either accompanied by birds, fish, varied branches that decorate the scene at once or simply alone, as the main motif or multiplying in the mosaic are important enough, so that we see in them a symbolic message that goes further the merely decorative.

From this point, the percentages are smaller: images of nymphs are 13%, shells or veneras 13% and allegorical images 6%. The set of Almenara de Adaja is very interesting since it alternates the specific iconography of the nymphs with the bath of Pegasus, the representation of the fountain of Hippocrene and mount Helicon, with a set of geometric mosaics and with vegetal motives: branches and flowers that arise from craterae, which constitute up to 19 in the rest of rooms. The decoration insists on the fertility of nature that feeds on water and is also collected in ceramic containers in order to use it and recover our health.

Another aspect to be taken into account in this analysis is the continuity of the reasons analyzed. Both in the early and late Roman Empire the iconography is repeated and it maintains its persistence, often becoming syncretized with Christian iconography. The cratera and the shell would be clear evidence of this.

In this paper we must not forget Carranque's set, wherein a series of mosaics such as Diana and the nymphs, Hilar and nymphs, nymph surprised by Eros, Priam and Tisbe, Hercules, Minerva surrounding Venus, in other spaces of the villa geometric mosaics are accompanied by craterae at the angles or seashells in the lunettes of another mosaic. This ensemble was, in turn, completed with the mosaics of Achilles and Briseida and Adonis fighting with the boar in front of Venus and Mars. In short, a complete ensemble where most of the different episodes are related to water. The underground aquifers, Arroyo de la Cabeza with Fuente de Pobo, the Guadarrama River and the Fuente de Tejada, already mentioned, consolidate this assertion. It is an aristocratic villa that as in the previous ones, the owner valued the virtues of the terrestrial waters and their beneficial properties.

A remarkable set is the one of villa of Prado in Valladolid, where in addition to the theme of Diana and the seasons, we find up to 23 craterae, which enables us to illustrate the connection we try to demonstrate.

Another of the motifs used in decorations of mosaics is the shell, but this element is not useful enough and we find them at specific places like Medinaceli, Soria or Clunia, Burgos. The latter, with waters in situ.

It should not be a surprising fact that this association existed, since medicinal waters have been one of the most valued natural resources by people through the ages. Oral transmission was maintained and many of them persist today.

They are the sacred waters and through the analysis we see how they influence the inhabitants of the environment, in an area between 30 and 40 km around. This way, gods being invoked and honored. In conclusion, ancestral cults with symbolic meaning in honor of Nature, that certain owners respect and perpetuate in the decorative ensembles of their houses.

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