THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TOPOGRAPHICAL MOSAICS OF *PROVINCIA ARABIA* AND THE MADABA MOSAIC MAP

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INTRODUCTION

Background and context

In *Provincia Arabia* between the sixth and eighth centuries, we encounter a series of topographical floor mosaics in the churches of various towns: Madaba, Umm al-Rasas, Ma῾in, Gerasa, Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, and Khirbat al-Samra. These mosaics all contain depictions of localities using a range of architectonic motifs and in a variety of compositions. Interestingly then, in the same period and region, there is a mosaic from Madaba which also contains these elements. However, unlike the other mosaics, the Madaba Map shows the cartographical relationships between these localities in the form of map. It is pertinent to ask here what is meant by the term „map" in the late Roman and Byzantine-Umayyad periods with which this thesis is concerned. A map is defined as a portrayal of the patterns and forms of a particular landscape, which uses symbols to depict topographical elements rather than renderings of their actual appearance. In a map, symbols are also used to depict more than the landscape contains in reality.[1] An example of this latter point is the Biblical captions found in the Madaba Map. Through these captions, the Madaba Map portrays the *Biblical* landscape as well as the physical geographical landscape.[2]

In this thesis, the „assemblage" refers to the ten topographical mosaics *and* the Madaba Map, whereas the „corpus" only refers to the ten topographical mosaics. We should now introduce the mosaics that are the focus of this thesis. These are: the topographical mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis, Ma῾in, the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, the Church of the Lions, the Church of Saint Stephen, the Church of Bishop Sergius, the Church of Priest Wa῾il (all at Umm al-Rasas), the Church of Saint John the Baptist, and the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, both at

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[1] Paul D.A. Harvey, *The History of Topographical Maps: Symbols, Pictures and Surveys,* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), pp.9-10.

[2] Michele Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan,* ed. by Patricia M. Bikai and Thomas A. Dailey, (Amman: American Center of Oriental Research, 1992; repr. 1997), pp.28-33.

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Gerasa, the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra, the Benaki Museum mosaic fragment, and the Madaba Mosaic Map in the Church of the Map (referred to as the Madaba Map or just the Map in this thesis for the sake of brevity). Some of the above topographical mosaics are only mentioned briefly in this thesis, while others form a much more fundamental part of the argument.

In chapter one, there is a description of several mosaics of the corpus in order to illuminate the compositional range in the assemblage. For the present, it suffices to briefly introduce the Madaba Map. This cartographical mosaic, probably datable to the end of the sixth century or beginning of the seventh century, displays the Holy Land from Tyre and Sidon in the north, to the Nile Delta in south, and from the Mediterranean Sea to the desert.[3] The Map contains no depictions of roads, but the sites are ordered according to road networks.[4] Towns and cities are indicated with symbols including adaptations of the Hellenistic walled-city motif and other architectonic motifs. These motifs are described and analysed in chapter one.

Next, the scope of topographical and cartographical iconographies should be explained, as this issue is the most fundamental to this thesis. It should be noted though, that there is no scholarly consensus on the scope of these iconographies.[5] A mosaic bearing topographical iconography depicts a topographical element, either imaginary or real, and either realistically depicted or rendered using motifs chosen from a stock of conventional images. Topographical iconography can include an isolated feature such as a church or a collection of geographical elements that are not in a cartographical relationship to each other in the form of a map. An example of a topographical mosaic is in the eighth-century Church of Saint Stephen.

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[3] ibid., p.27.
[4] ibid., p.29.
[5] Asher Ovadiah, Yoram Tsafrir, pers. comm.

Surrounding the central carpet is a border depicting ten cities in the Nile Delta, interspersed with birds, fish, water flowers, and boys hunting and fishing. This border is surrounded by another depicting the cities of *Provincia Arabia* and Palestine. There is an element of geographical relationship between the cityscapes in this mosaic in that the cities of Palestine, *Provincia Arabia*, and Egypt are grouped together according to region.[6] However, the geographical relationships in the Saint Stephen mosaic are not formed as a map, according to the definition given above. Lastly, topographical iconography in a mosaic can take any composition, whereas cartographical iconography is defined as such because it depicts the geographical relationships between sites and topographical features in the form of a map. In the assemblage, this type of iconography is only displayed in the Madaba Map.

Like the Saint Stephen mosaic, the eighth-century mosaic in the Church on the Acropolis displays a largely geographically-accurate sequence of cities. The mosaic is a border around the central hall of the church and depicts cities and towns on the west and east banks of the Jordan River.[7] Both the Ma,in and Saint Stephen mosaics display a sequence of cities in the same manner as the Roman cartographical tradition of the itinerary.[8] Even though it is only mosaics with a cartographical composition in the form of a map[9] that are defined as cartographical mosaics in this thesis, this issue warrants further analysis in chapter one, where we discuss cartographical compositional *sources*.

Therefore, we have established that the Madaba Map depicts cartographical relationships in the form of a map, but is *somehow* related to the

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[6] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.238.
[7] ibid., p.201.
[8] Chapter 1.4, pp.36-42.
[9] Oswald Dilke, „Itineraries and Geographical Maps in the Early and Late Roman Empires‟ in *The History of Cartography,* ed. by John B. Harley and David Woodward, 3 vols (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987-2007), I, (1987), 234-257 (pp.234-235, p.249).

topographical mosaics of the same period (sixth to eighth centuries) and region (*Provincia Arabia*). The criteria for the assertion that there is a relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map consists of three major points: their geographical proximity to each other, their chronological proximity, and their artistic similarities, such as the use of architectonic topographical motifs descended from the same prototypes, including the walled-city motif and the combination of nilotic and architectonic topographical motifs.[10] These connections indicate that despite the variety of compositions in the topographical corpus and the cartographical composition of the Madaba Map, they share some artistic origins. It remains to be seen in chapter three whether these shared origins indicate shared function or meaning.

Amongst the criteria used to select the assemblage is the presence of at least one architectonic topographical motif in any type of composition, where that topographical depiction is not a background feature, but the focus of the scene. The buildings in the mosaics also need to indicate a specific locality, whether imaginary or real, rather than just act as architectural ornament. An architectonic motif refers to a locality if there are identifiable structures and buildings in the mosaic that indicate a specific town or city. The presence of a toponym, or the geographical and chronological closeness of the mosaic to other topographical mosaics are also criteria for whether an architectonic motif indicates a specific locality. Therefore, if an architectonic motif with no other distinguishing „topographical‟ features is found in a time (sixth to eighth century) and place (*Provincia Arabia*) that connects it with unambiguously topographical mosaics, then it has been included within the assemblage. This is the case with the inclusion of the mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius. This sixth-century mosaic contains the depiction of an isolated building. The building is not

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[10] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* pp.34-37.

recognisable as an actual topographical feature, nor is it accompanied by a toponym. However, it is stylistically similar to other topographical motifs in the assemblage and is found in a period and region where topographical mosaic iconography was popular. Lastly, not all topographical mosaics in the churches of *Provincia Arabia* have been included in this assemblage; only those that are the most representative of the extant assemblage in the province.

Literature review

This thesis intends to fill the gap in scholarship created by the fact that the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map has not been fully interpreted. In 1901, Clermont-Ganneau articulated some of the most pertinent questions about the Madaba Map, and they are amongst the same questions which occupy us here: What is the origin of the Madaba Map? What is its purpose? Why is the Madaba Map located where it is?[11] Our task is to broaden these questions to include the topographical mosaics of the region because of their relationship with the Madaba Map. This thesis aims to offer answers to these questions asked by Clermont-Ganneau, but also to establish how the origins, purpose, and location of the Madaba Map reveal a relationship with the topographical corpus.

In the discussion of the relationship which is central to this thesis, the major scholar of the mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and Palestine, Michele Piccirillo went no further than acknowledging the presence of „architectural‟ motifs, walled cities, and depictions of buildings in both the Madaba Map and the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the parts of Palestine that are now within modern Jordan. According to Piccirillo, the Madaba Map remained unique "for its geographical and historical interest".[12] So much

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[11] Charles Clermont-Ganneau, „The Land of Promise, Mapped in Mosaic at Madaba‟, *PEFQS* (July 1901), 235-246, (pp.242-243).
[12] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* p.26.

more could have been said about the uniqueness of the Madaba Map in comparison to the topographical mosaics, but was not. In Piccirillo's work, there was no deeper analysis of the nature of the Madaba Map and how it relates to the topographical corpus. There are also some problems posed by his terminology and these terminological problems are quite common in the study of the topographical mosaics of the region, as we shall see below. The terminological issue is that Piccirillo referred to the „architectural" representations in both the topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map.

An „architectural" motif suggests a depiction of a built structure that does not refer to any particular location. Therefore, this is clearly not the category to which the motifs in the topographical corpus and Madaba Map belong. Furthermore, Piccirillo acknowledged several points that would be expected to lead him to consider the relationship between the topographical corpus and Madaba Map. He acknowledged that topographical motifs in the mosaics of the region are frequently accompanied by nilotic motifs but drew no conclusions about what this means for the relationship between the topographical mosaics and the lone cartographical mosaic. Moreover, Piccirillo acknowledged that the Ma‚in and Saint Stephen mosaics contain elements of geographical accuracy but did not then connect this with the geographical accuracies of the Madaba Map, other than to point out that some cities appear in both the Map and the Saint Stephen mosaic. Nor did Piccirillo ask any questions about what these numerous similarities between Arabian topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map could mean.[13]

Noël Duval also categorised the architectonic motifs in the floor mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and Palestine as „architectural" rather than topographical. However, by way of justification for his terminology, Duval was at least concerned with an analysis of the architectural elements and composite parts

[13] ibid., pp.34-37.

of a range of architectonic motifs. As part of this analysis, Duval established categories of topographical motif, including the detailed vignettes such as Jerusalem in the Madaba Map, walled cities such as are found at Gerasa, and isolated church motifs. He also acknowledged the connections between the „architectural" motifs of Syria, Ravenna, and *Provincia Arabia*/Palestine. However, Duval"s study only considered the relationship between the topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map insofar as their architectonic motifs share stylistic qualities and architectural form. Therefore, Duval"s work assists our analysis in chapter one, dedicated to a discussion of origins, but chapters two and three take these observations and use them to draw deeper conclusions about the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map.

Duval also referred to J.G Deckers" categorisation of city motifs.[14] Deckers" view was that we could divide the corpus of late Antique art bearing city representations into personifications, pictograms, and city plans. Deckers also created different thematic categories of city representation and placed the Madaba Map in his category of *orbis pictus*. He placed every other mosaic of our topographical corpus that he dealt with in his category of *Terra marique et Nillandschaft* because of the dominance of nilotic themes in these mosaics. Therefore, Deckers analysed the relationship between the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map only to this extent. Deckers" focus was on the thematic similarities in examples of late Antique art bearing city depictions. His focus was also unrestricted to *Provincia Arabia*, and took into account the art of Italian, North African, and other provenances. The purpose of Deckers" study was to categorise the main forms and topics of city depiction, rather than analyse their stylistic

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[14] Noël Duval, „Les Representations Architecturales sur les Mosaiques Chretiennes de Jordanie", in *Les Eglises de Jordanie et leurs Mosaiques: Actes de la journee d'etudes organisee le 22 fevrier 1989 au musee de la Civilisation gallo-romaine de Lyon*, ed. by Noël Duval, (Beirut: Institut Francais du Proche Orient, 2003), pp.211-285, (pp.211-213, pp.281-283).

development, which is one of the aims of the discussion of architectonic topographical motifs in chapter one of this thesis.[15]

Ehrensperger-Katz acknowledged the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map by implication rather than explicitly, especially in relation to the artistic origins of these mosaics. Katz''s work dealt with the artistic origins of the walled-city motif, stylistic adaptations of which appear in several mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. She started with its appearance in wall paintings of Pompeii and its eventual adoption into the cartographical documents of the early Byzantine period, such as the *Peutinger Table* and the *Corpus Agrimensorum*.[16] Katz related these origins to the walled-city motifs found in the Church of Saint John the Baptist and the Church of Saints Peter and Paul at Gerasa. As is discussed in chapter one, the walled-city motifs in the Church of Saint John the Baptist are found in the oldest extant mosaics of the assemblage and therefore display a version of the motif that is most similar to the prototypes discussed by Katz. Katz also made the important distinction between the components of these motifs that are based on realistic detail and those components that are conventional. Katz''s acknowledgement of the relationship, in terms of artistic origins, between the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map is implicit in her recognition of the detailed walled-city motif used to depict Jerusalem in the Map. However, Katz asserted that this vignette is not comparable to the rest of her assemblage, which spans a much wider geographical scope than the assemblage in this thesis. She also found that the artistic origins of the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map can be connected with the artistic traditions of North Africa and the eastern

[15] Johannes Deckers, „Tradition and Adaptatio'', *RM*, 95 (1989), 303-382, (p.304, p.309, p.346, p.381).
[16] Ingrid Ehrensperger-Katz, „Les Representations de Villes fortifiees dans l''art Paleochretien et leurs derivees Byzantines'', *CA,* 19 (1969), 1-27, (pp.1-3).

provinces, which is further explored in this thesis.[17] Katz acknowledged that variations of the walled-city motif are found in both the Madaba Map and another mosaic of the same general provenance and period. It is the task of this thesis to analyse the implications of these connections for function and meaning.

Although the above sources did not explore the deeper implications of the stylistic and thematic similarities between Arabian topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map, Donceel-Voûte went some of the way towards analysis of the meaning of these motifs and their compositions. She noted that the position of the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map emphasises the city as the Christian centre of the cosmographical scheme.[18] Donceel-Voûte also pointed out that the depiction of Madaba in the Map was probably aligned with the Jerusalem vignette for propagandistic purposes and connected this element of the Madaba Map to the alignment of the depictions of Jerusalem and Kastron Mefaa in the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen.[19] Therefore, Donceel-Voûte drew an important parallel between the Madaba Map and the Saint Stephen mosaic, not just in terms of their artistic similarities, but their shared *meaning*. Donceel-Voûte analysed the presence, in two different mosaics, of architectonic topographical motifs depicting Jerusalem, which were aligned with an architectonic topographical motif representing the town in which the mosaic was found. She then took these observations of the motifs and the composition of these motifs and drew the conclusion that a mosaic of our topographical corpus shares a layer of meaning with the Madaba Map. The task of this thesis is to extend that analysis and investigate whether other mosaics of the topographical corpus share layers of meaning with the Madaba Map.

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[17] ibid., p.14, p.17, p.19.
[18] Pauline Donceel-Voûte, „La Carte de Madaba: Cosmographie, Anachronisme et Propagande", *RB*, 95, 4 (1988), 519-542, (pp.520-522).
[19] ibid., pp.523-524, p.526.

Our discussion of Donceel-Voûte‟s work introduced the significance of composition in this thesis. In fact, it is composition that most separates the Madaba Map from the topographical corpus. In 1938, F.M. Biebel made a distinction between the different compositions of the mosaic iconography, specifically in relation to the representations of topography in the Madaba Map and in the sixth-century church mosaics of Gerasa.[20] Biebel‟s interpretation categorised the composition of the Madaba Map as cartographical, but the compositions in the churches of Gerasa as part of the landscape tradition.[21] Biebel‟s comparisons and distinctions between the different types of composition in mosaics bearing similar motifs was an important step forward in the scholarship of these mosaics, as it allows us to attempt to answer questions about the nature of the relationship between the rest of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. Biebel‟s work acknowledged that there was a relationship between the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map to be analysed. However, as with the other scholars discussed here, he did not broaden his analysis to substantially consider the *meaning* of the topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map, and how they might share layers of meaning.

Lucy-Anne Hunt connected the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* with the Madaba Map in terms of the depiction of townscapes in both. Hunt analysed too large a corpus to really come to an understanding of architectonic topographical depictions in *Provincia Arabia*. For example, Hunt included the topographical personifications in the Hippolytus Hall in Madaba in her analysis. Although these three women represent Rome, Madaba, and the unidentified Gregoria, they do so using personifications; an entirely different motif from that analysed in this thesis, and therefore best relegated to another study. Like Biebel and Duval, Hunt also acknowledged

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[20] Franklin M. Biebel, „The Walled Cities of the Gerasa Mosaics‟ in *Gerasa: City of the Decapolis*, ed. by Carl H. Kraeling, (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1938), pp.341-351, (pp.348-349).
[21] ibid., p.351.

the formulaic differences between the city depictions in the Madaba Map and some other mosaics of the topographical corpus, such as the Gerasa mosaics, in that the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map is largely based on realistic features of the actual city of Jerusalem, and the Gerasa cityscapes are based on conventional motifs. These observations are an important part of the discourse on the relationship between the topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map, but are now well-established observations. Importantly, Hunt established a connection in terms of meaning between the townscapes of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. According to her, these townscapes reflect urban aspirations and pride, religious concerns, and an attempt to connect their town with the great centres of Classical Antiquity.[22]

This latter point is connected to the depiction of Egypt in the Madaba Map and the Egyptian cities depicted in the Gerasa mosaics, as Egypt was considered to be one of the great centres of Classical Antiquity. Hunt's theory about the meaning of the Madaba Map specifically is also very similar to the theory put forward by Donceel-Voûte in 1988. Hunt suggested that the position of the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map in front of the apse connects this city with Madaba (although she is unclear as to how). She therefore assessed that the message is one of civic competition, pride, and aspirations, similar to Donceel-Voûte's propagandistic theory. Hunt also made the important distinction between architectural backdrops and depictions that confer a sense of place. She also connected the origins of the topographical mosaic theme in *Provincia Arabia* to those in San Apollinare Nuovo and Santa Maria Maggiore with no explanation of how their origins were related.[23] Therefore, the size of Hunt's article and its scope was

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[22] Lucy-Anne Hunt, „The Byzantine Mosaics of Jordan in Context: Remarks on Imagery, Donors and Mosaicists", in *Byzantium, Eastern Christendom and Islam: Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean,* 2 vols (London: The Pindar Press, 1998), I, 1-28, (p.4, p.13).
[23] ibid., pp.14-15.

inappropriate to answer the questions this thesis sets out to answer, but the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map was acknowledged in the sense of their shared meaning and purpose, and with a wider scope of topographical mosaics than Donceel-Voûte considered.

Significance, methodology, and research questions

The history of the scholarship has demonstrated how the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map has been perceived by scholars over the last century. The literature review should have partly made clear the significance of this thesis. In addition, this thesis is a significant contribution because it seeks to clarify what the relationship is between these topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map. The literature review demonstrated that the relationship has mainly been viewed in terms of the shared motifs found in both the topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map. This thesis asks whether that relationship is more profound or varied than that, and then finally asks what the implications are of these shared artistic origins. Specifically, this thesis progresses towards an analysis of the function and meaning of the topographical corpus and Madaba Map. This final analysis is supplemented by information taken from the earlier analysis of the origins, date, and provenance of our mosaic assemblage.

Specific methodological approaches are, with one exception, only used in chapter three. The surveys of the ecclesiastical and economic history of the region point to our use of methodology which analyses the social context of the artwork in order to understand the concepts behind it.[24] It is also in chapter three that we greatly rely upon a method used by Kupfer in her analysis of medieval maps, which involves the concept that the

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[24] Robin Cormack, „Patronage and New Programs of Byzantine Iconography‟ in *The Byzantine Eye: Studies in Art and Patronage*, ed. by Robin Cormack (London: Variorum Reprints, 1989), pp.609-638 (pp.610 613).

topographical corpus and Madaba Map have layers of meaning, created by the artistic context of the mosaic pavement.[25] Amongst the archaeological methodologies applied in this thesis is an analysis of the mosaic pavements within their architectural context. This method is utilised in the section on function in chapter three. Moreover, in chapter two, there is a review of the methods used to date the topographical mosaic corpus and the Madaba Map. Amongst these methods are the use of mosaic inscriptions, historical context, architectural elements of the church in which the mosaic was placed, and stylistic analysis. Kitzinger placed a great deal of emphasis on the method of analysing mosaic pavements within their archaeological context, as he felt it was important for dating purposes.[26]

We should now focus on the major research questions of this thesis. Firstly, the core question is: what is the nature of the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map? In order to answer this question, the thesis has been divided into three areas. These include the nature of the relationship in terms of motif and compositional origins, in terms of dating and provenance issues, and finally, in terms of function and meaning. Chapter one asks what the conceptual, motif, and compositional convergences and divergences between the topographical mosaics and Madaba Map indicate about their relationship. This chapter also demonstrates that two mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map are related to cartographical sources. It is at this point that we ask what the implications of this are for the relationship between these two topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map, as well as the implications for the relationship between these three mosaics and the rest of the assemblage. It is here that we come back to the scope of a cartographical mosaic, as

[25] Marcia Kupfer, „Medieval world maps: embedded images, interpretive frames", *Word & Image*, 10, 3 (1994), 262-288, (p.279).

[26] Ernst Kitzinger, „Stylistic Developments in Pavement Mosaics in the Greek East from the Age of Constantine to the Age of Justinian", in *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies,* ed. by W. Eugene Kleinbauer, (Bloomington; London: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp.64-88, (p.74).

explained above, and ask about the distinction between a mosaic based partially on a cartographical source, and the finished product actually being a cartographical mosaic.

Chapter two asks whether the dating of the Madaba Map and some of the less reliably-datable mosaics of the topographical corpus are accurate. This question is asked in order to confirm the chronological criteria for establishing a relationship between them in the first place. In the provenance part of this chapter, the section that begins with a discussion of the geographical distribution of the assemblage provides a context for the analysis of the mosaic workshop distribution in *Provincia Arabia*. This section asks whether the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map were equally affected by the workshop distribution and introduces the possibility that the workshop responsible for the Madaba Map also produced mosaics of the topographical corpus. This discussion therefore demonstrates another area in which the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together. We then ask more complex questions of provenance, such as what route and transmission processes topographical and cartographical mosaic iconographies took into *Provincia Arabia*. This part of chapter two asks how these provenance issues connect back to the artistic origins discussed in chapter one and also asks what the implications are of these processes for the relationship between the topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map. Finally, chapter two asks again about the relationship through investigation of the more complex implications of the provenance of the Madaba Map and topographical corpus. These implications consist of whether the Madaba Map and topographical corpus display Arabian or Byzantine artistic character.

Chapter three then takes the information and analysis from the first two chapters and asks what these tell us about the function and meaning of the topographical corpus and Madaba Map. This chapter asks how the

economic, ecclesiastical, and literary background of *Provincia Arabia*, particularly in the sixth century, contextualises some possibilities for the function and meaning of the topographical mosaics and Madaba Map. These backgrounds allow us to move on to specific issues of the relationship between the function of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. The discussion of function focuses on the implications for function of the mosaic‟s position in the church and its architectural context; and what these conclusions tell us about the relationship between the topographical corpus and Madaba Map in this regard. The liturgical implications of this section lead to a discussion that covers both function and meaning, and this is whether the Madaba Map and topographical corpus had any particular significance for the Chalcedonian or Monophysite communities of *Provincia Arabia*. This chapter also asks what the reasons are for the combination of nilotic and topographical motifs in Arabian mosaics and what the *meaning* of this combination is.[27] Finally, this chapter asks about the extent to which the topographical corpus and Madaba Map share common meaning or layers of meaning. Ultimately, this thesis claims that there is a significant and strong relationship between the topographical mosaics and Madaba Map in terms of motifs, date, and provenance. However, the compositional variation of the Madaba Map from the corpus of topographical mosaics resonates in variation of meaning too.

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[27] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* p.37.

CHAPTER ONE
ORIGINS

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the artistic and cartographical origins of the motifs and compositions respectively in the topographical mosaic corpus and the Madaba Map. The aim of this investigation is to ascertain the degree to which these motif and compositional origins are shared and this assessment helps to answer the larger question about the nature of the relationship between the topographical mosaic corpus and the Madaba Map. The key question in this chapter is: what do the motif and compositional convergences and divergences between the corpus and the Map tell us about their relationship? We begin with a discussion of the different types of architectonic topographical motif encountered in *both* the topographical corpus *and* the Madaba Map. The discussion of the different types of topographical motif facilitates an analysis of the artistic origins of these motifs. These sections demonstrate an area in which the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together, as both are composed of the same range of motifs. In essence then, if the composition of the Madaba Map is ignored, the Madaba Map could be categorised as a topographical mosaic just on the basis of its motifs.

The analysis of the motifs facilitates the next discussion of the various compositions in which these motifs are found in the mosaics of *Provincia Arabia*. The compositions of several mosaics of the corpus, including the Madaba Map, are described in order to display the range of topographical/cartographical compositions encountered in *Provincia Arabia*. Lastly, there is a discussion of the compositional precedents of three mosaics of the assemblage, including the Madaba Map, which are found in the cartographical documents of Roman Antiquity. This analysis causes us to question the nature of the relationship between these two topographical mosaics based on cartographical sources and the Madaba Map in regard to compositional precedents, but also the relationship between these three mosaics and the rest of the assemblage. In contrast to the discussion of motifs and their artistic origins, these cartographical precedents show the extent to which the Madaba Map is a cartographical mosaic, which therefore means that it stands apart from the Arabian topographical corpus.

1.1 Motifs

The range of motifs in topographical *and* cartographical mosaic iconography and their artistic origins displays an aspect in which the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map is close. This discussion demonstrates that both the corpus and the Madaba Map contain conventional motifs as well as motifs that display elements of realistic topography. There are two main types of motif described in this section: those which actually depict a whole city and those using an isolated building motif as a symbol for the whole city. Of the category of motif which depicts the whole city, one sub-category attempts to depict the realistic topography of the location, whereas the other only depicts the most evocative features of the site. The Madaba Map is notable in that it contains all of these types of topographical motif, whereas the mosaics of the topographical corpus usually only contain one type or the other *per* mosaic. The major difference between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map relates to the large compositional scope of the Map, which therefore facilitates a larger range of motifs within the one mosaic.

There are two broad types of topographical motif encountered in our assemblage. One is the walled-city motif which clearly depicts a whole city. The second is the depiction of a church or other building which is often intended as a topographical symbol for a city. The first type of motif is found in the topographical mosaics in the Church of Saint John the Baptist (**1.1**) and the Church of Saints Peter and Paul (**1.2**), both at Gerasa and dated to the sixth century. The second type of motif is found the topographical mosaic in the eighth-century Church on the Acropolis and the sixth-century Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat (**1.3**). Its large compositional scope means that *both* broad types of topographical motif are present in the Madaba Map. For example, larger cities in the Madaba Map, such as Jerusalem, Gaza, and Pelusion are depicted with walled cities containing great detail within the walls and viewed from a western elevation (**1.4**). Smaller cities of the Map such as Lydda and Ashdod are depicted using several buildings or an indication of colonnaded streets (**1.5**). Lastly, the most basic topographical depiction in the Madaba Map are motifs of isolated

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churches or a gate flanked by two towers, which are meant to represent an entire village **(1.6)**.[1] The motif of two towers flanking a gate as a topographical symbol for a town is also found, before its appearance in the Madaba Map, in the *Peutinger Table* and the mosaic of the villa of *dominus Julius* from Carthage, dated to the end of the fourth century **(1.7)**.[2] The implications of these relationships are discussed later in this chapter and in chapter two. The wide range of topographical motifs in the Madaba Map sets it apart from the topographical corpus, because the large-scale cartographical composition and scope of the Madaba Map facilitates this large range of motifs. The motifs in themselves are the same and are derived from the same sources as those in the mosaics of the topographical corpus.

There are another two sub-categories of the topographical motif which actually *depicts* the whole city or town. These categories include attempts at exact renderings of a city, and contracted ciphers of a city displaying only its most recognisable features.[3] It is likely, in the latter case, that the other features of the motif were drawn from the conventional mosaic motif cycle. The city motif from the conventional cycle, which displays no features that refer to an actual building or city, is most often composed of towers and crenellated walls depicted in polygonal plan with a main door. This type is found in the *Notitia Dignitatum* and the *Peutinger Table*, both discussed later in this chapter.[4] Moreover, this type of motif is also found in the mosaic in the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa and the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra. The best example, and arguably, the only example of the first sub-category is the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map, which we come back to shortly.

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[1] Herbert Donner, *The Mosaic Map of Madaba: An Introductory Guide,* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1992), p.17.
[2] Guadelupe L. Monteagudo, „The Architectonic Models on the Madaba Mosaic Map‟ in *The Madaba Map Centenary 1897-1997: Travelling Through the Byzantine Umayyad Period: Proceedings of the International Conference Held in Amman, 7-9 April 1997*, ed. by Michele Piccirillo and Eugenio Alliata, (Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 1999), pp.256-258, (p.256).
[3] Deckers, p.304.
[4] Duval, *Architecturales*, p.213.

Of the second sub-category - contracted ciphers of cities only displaying the most evocative features in order to „refer" to a specific city - is a wall mosaic in the western provinces, in San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, originally built by the Ostrogothic king, Theodoric (493-526) **(1.8)**.[5] This mosaic is a particularly clear example of this sub-category. The depictions of Classe and Ravenna were executed during the reign of Theodoric[6] in around 520.[7] Theodoric"s palace on the right wall of the nave acts as a symbol of Ravenna, and the city walls and harbour of Classe are a symbol for that city on the left wall. Therefore, the nave mosaics of San Apollinare present topographical mosaics which depict a city using few, but evocative topographical symbols. Examples of this type of topographical mosaic, composed of few, but evocative symbols are also found in *Provincia Arabia*. The two mosaics which best represent this type are the town „plans" of Kastron Mefaa in the Church of the Lions and the Church of Saint Stephen **(1.9)**. Both of these mosaics, although separated by approximately two centuries, feature the depiction of a column as part of the landscape of Kastron Mefaa. Therefore, this column was probably a real topographical feature of the Byzantine-Umayyad town.[8] These mosaics contain topographical motifs which are largely conventional, but with one realistic feature that evokes the town of Kastron Mefaa.

The depiction of real topographical features introduces the issue of the extent to which the Madaba Map or *any* mosaic of the topographical corpus of *Provincia Arabia* depicts realistic topographical features. The depiction of realistic topographical features is not found in all mosaics of the topographical corpus, but is not only a feature of the Madaba Map either, as the above examples from Umm al-Rasas demonstrate. One example that displays realistic topographical motifs is the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map, which presents a depiction

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[5] Nano Chatzidakis, *Greek Art: Byzantine Mosaics,* trans. by Alexandra Doumas (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1994), p.227.
Ejnar Dyggve, *Ravennatum Palatium Sacrum: La Basilica Ipetrale per Cerimonie,* (Copenhagen: I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaard, 1941), p.7.
[6] Otto G. Von Simson, *Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p.82.
[7] Anna Maria Cetto, *The Ravenna Mosaics,* Orbus pictus 1, (Berne: Hallwag, 1960), p.30, pl.XI. Dyggve, pp.8-9.
[8] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.37.

of the *Nea Theotokos* church and the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem"s *cardo*.[9] Moreover, between 1969 and 1993, Avigad"s archaeological team found architectural and epigraphic evidence of the *Nea Theotokos* in Jerusalem to support the literary and pictorial evidence[10] provided by Procopius and the Madaba Map respectively. The architectural evidence excavated by Avigad and his team revealed a large structure, which in conjunction with the literary and pictorial evidence, indicated that this church was the *Nea Theotokos*. Further substantiating that this church was the *Nea*, Avigad"s team discovered that the western edge of the structure approached the edge of the *cardo*, just as depicted in the Madaba Map.[11]

Therefore, it appears that the Jerusalem vignette in the Madaba Map bears several topographically-realistic elements. Nevertheless, the Jerusalem vignette is also a Byzantine-period Arabian adaptation of the conventional Hellenistic walled-city motif put into bird"s-eye perspective. This element in combination with the accurate topographical detail has resulted in agreement between many scholars (such as Lagrange, Guthe, Gisler, Vincent and Abel, Thomsen, Avi-Yonah, O"Callaghan, Milik, Donner, and others) that the Jerusalem vignette is a combination of the conventional late Antique walled-city motif and realistic topographical features.[12] Therefore, the Jerusalem vignette is an extension of the type of motif found in the Church of the Lions and the Church of Saint Stephen, which evokes a specific location with fewer evocative topographical features than are found in this vignette.

Both the Madaba Map and two mosaics of the topographical corpus (the Saint Stephen and Church of the Lions mosaics) contain topographically-accurate motifs. However, not all of the mosaics of the topographical corpus also contain

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[9] Nahman Avigad, „The Nea: Justinian and Apos Church of St. Mary, Mother of God" in *Ancient Churches Revealed,* ed. by Yoram Tsafrir, ([n.p]: Israel Exploration Society, 1993), pp.128-135, (p.128).

[10] Kenneth G. Holum, „The Classical City in the Sixth Century: Survival and Transformation", in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian,* ed. by Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.87-112, (p.96).

[11] Avigad, pp.129-130.

[12] Yoram Tsafrir, „The Holy City of Jerusalem in the Madaba Map" in *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.155-163, (p.155).

topographically-accurate motifs. In fact, the topographical motifs in the mosaics of the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius and the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra **(1.10)**, amongst others, only display conventional motifs in the conventional styles that became common in Byzantine-period *Provincia Arabia*. Ultimately however, the conclusion here is that topographically-accurate motifs are at least not only found in the Madaba Map.

Therefore, we have demonstrated the range of motifs in the compositions of both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. Each category and sub-category of architectonic topographical motif is found in the Madaba Map, whereas usually only one type of motif is found in each mosaic of the topographical corpus. Both the corpus and the Map display some realistic topographical features, so this element is not solely a characteristic of the Madaba Map. Similarly though, both also display some conventional topographical motifs. It is mainly the extensive scope of the Madaba Map that facilitates the inclusion of a wider range of these motifs than is found in any other single mosaic of the topographical corpus. Therefore, this section permitted us to categorise the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map together, and this analysis continues with a discussion of the artistic origins of these motifs next.

1.2 Artistic origins of the motifs

The discussion of the types of topographical motifs encountered in both the corpus and the Madaba Map has prepared the background for an analysis of the artistic origins of these motifs. There are three main categories of art that contributed to the development of the motifs in Byzantine-period Arabian topographical *and* cartographical iconography, and that establish the nature of the relationship between the topographical corpus and Madaba Map in this regard. These are: the Hellenistic polygonal walled-city motif, nilotic iconography, and late Roman North African architectonic mosaic motifs. These three artistic traditions influenced the prototypes of the architectonic topographical motifs used in Byzantine-period Arabian mosaics, as well as being a conceptual influence on our corpus and the Map.

We begin with the Hellenistic walled-city motif and its influence on our assemblage. This motif and the Arabian stylistic adaptations of it, is one of the most frequently encountered motifs in the topographical and cartographical mosaic iconography of *Provincia Arabia*. This motif links topographical and cartographical mosaics, as both iconographies utilised it, but in different compositions. We should begin with a discussion of the origins of this motif in order to contextualise discussions of the transmission of compositions and motifs to *Provincia Arabia* later in this chapter, and particularly in chapter two. The prototype of what would later become the polygonal walled-city motif in the Hellenistic period appears to have emerged in Asia Minor. The first extant example is from the fifth-century B.C. frieze in the Heroön of Gjölbashi-Trysa and displays towers joined by crenellated walls. Later, the walled-city motif found in the frieze of the Nereid monument from Xanthos and probably datable to *circa* 420 B.C., shows the walled-city motif start to develop into a polygonal shape.[13] Finally, the cup from Tanagra, datable to the second or third century B.C. displays the cities of Athens and Corinth in definite polygonal shape and with towers at varying angles, similar to the form of the walled-city motif in the sixth-century Gerasa mosaics **(1.11)**.[14]

The fully-developed polygonal walled-city motif appears to have emerged in the Hellenistic period and can then be found in artefacts of Italian provenance even before its appearance in the Christian art of the east. The earliest painting displaying it is a fresco from Pompeii representing the „Fall of Icarus" and the walled-city motif in this fresco displays the features of the walled-city motif later found in the topographical mosaics in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul and the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa. The motifs in the *Tabulae Iliacae* are similar and this artefact was a series of reliefs with depictions of the Trojan War next to the text of the *Iliad*, probably datable to the reign of Augustus. The walled-city motif was also used in commemorative monuments of the Roman Empire, such as the reliefs on the Column of Trajan (AD 113),

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[13] Arthur H. Smith, *A Catalogue of Sculpture in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum*, (London: Printed by order of the Trustees, 1892-1904), 876-b, 877.
[14] Biebel, pp.342-343.
Carl Robert, *Homerische Becher*, Winckelmannsprogramm, 50 (Berlin: Archäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin, 1890), p.46.

where it appears numerous times as a camp, a fortress, and a barbarian village, and on similar monuments such as the Column of Marcus Aurelius, dated to AD 176-193, and the Arch of Septimius Severus, dated to AD 203. Later, in the fourth century, the first *Vatican Vergil* displayed walled-city motifs very similar to those in the Gerasa mosaics, particularly in the scene of Mercury appearing to Aeneas as he builds the walls of Carthage **(1.12)**.[15] The walled-city motif was also adopted in the production of cartographical documents, such as in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, where it is used to signify provinces **(1.13)**.[16] This document, as well as containing the walled-city motif, was a part of the cartographical tradition of Roman Antiquity. Therefore, the walled-city motif provides a connection between the artistic and cartographical precedents of the topographical corpus and Madaba Map.

The walled-city motif is found in another cartographical document that predates the Madaba Map and the Arabian topographical corpus – the fifth-century *Peutinger Table* **(1.14)**. Like the Madaba Map, the *Peutinger Table* has a cartographical composition and displays topographical symbols that communicate a sliding scale of regional importance. Accordingly, three of the most important cities of the Empire were rendered using city personifications (a motif *not* found in the Madaba Map), and six cities of lesser importance were rendered using the polygonal walled-city motif: Aquileia, Ravenna, Thessalonica, Nicea, Nicomedia, and Ancyra (with toponym missing) **(1.15)**.[17] Again, the style of walled-city motif in the *Peutinger Table* is very similar to the style of walled-city motif in the two topographical mosaics from sixth-century Gerasa.[18] Another artefact bearing walled-city motifs similar to those in the Gerasa mosaics is the sixth-century *Vienna Genesis* manuscript **(1.16)**. The walled-city motif in the scene of Rebecca meeting Abraham‟s servant is polygonal and seen from the same perspective as the walled-city motifs in the

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[15] Biebel, pp.342-345, (p.343).
[16] Ehrensperger-Katz, pp.1-3.
[17] Biebel, p.345.
Ehrensperger-Katz, pp.2-3.
[18] Benet Salway, „Travel, itineraria and tabellaria‟, in *Travel and Geography in the Roman Empire*, ed. by Colin Adams and Ray Laurence (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), pp.22-66, (p.46).

Gerasa mosaics. Another correlation between the artefacts is in the form of the towers, their position in the composition, and the form of the buildings inside the walls.[19] This evidence suggests that these examples were direct prototypes, at least of the Gerasa mosaics.

So far, the stylistic precedents of only the sixth-century Gerasa mosaics have been discussed because the walled-city motifs in the Gerasa mosaics display less adaptation from their prototypes than the walled-city motifs in the other mosaics of the assemblage. The walled-city motifs in the other mosaics of the assemblage are descended from the same artistic prototypes as the Gerasa mosaics, but underwent extensive development in *Provincia Arabia* between the sixth and eighth centuries. The stylistic closeness of the Gerasa mosaics to their prototypes makes sense when it is remembered that the Gerasa mosaics are the earliest extant mosaics of the Arabian topographical corpus. In contrast, one of the latest mosaics of the corpus - the eighth-century mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen – still displays motifs based on the original Hellenistic walled-city motif, but they are greatly adapted from the prototype.

The walled-city motifs in the Saint Stephen mosaic are no longer polygonal, but their shapes were adapted to fit the rectangular panels in which they were placed **(1.17)**. The components within the city walls are detailed, and are highly schematic to an extent not found in the sixth-century Gerasa mosaics. Moreover, the walled-city motifs in the mosaic in the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra, dated to the seventh century, are also based on the Hellenistic motif but were adapted to a more schematic shape, and the details within the walls rendered more simplified and sparse. However, unlike the Saint Stephen walled-city motifs, the motif at Khirbat al-Samra still bears the traditional polygonal shape. Similarly, in the Madaba Map, the Jerusalem vignette is based on the Hellenistic walled-city motif tradition, but presents the formula in full bird"s-eye view as opposed to the partially frontal and partially bird"s-eye perspective of the traditional Hellenistic walled-city motif found in the Gerasa

[19] Emmy Wellesz, *The Vienna Genesis with an introduction and notes,* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), p.9.

mosaics. These examples display the stylistic development of the motif in the mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* between the sixth and eighth centuries. Ultimately, the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together in terms of their walled-city motifs being based on the same Hellenistic polygonal walled-city motif prototypes, and in terms of the stylistic development of this motif in *Provincia Arabia*.

The very first appearances of the Hellenistic walled-city motif, discussed earlier in this section, indicate that it originated in locations west of *Provincia Arabia*, Syria and Palestine - regions where the motif is found in the Byzantine period. This evidence leads us then to question how and where the motif first came to the east in order to strengthen the argument that the prototypes of the walled-city motifs in the corpus and the Map were the same. There are two main options for the eastern city or region the motif first entered: Alexandria and Syria-Palestine. We look first at the city of Alexandria. It is possible that the Hellenistic walled-city motif first entered the eastern artistic repertoire in Alexandria because of two main instances of walled cities in illustrated manuscripts of Alexandrian provenance. There are walled cities representing the provinces of Asia Minor in the *Alexandrian World Chronicle*, dated to the seventh century on a stylistic basis.[20] Cosmas Indicopleustes" original *Christian Topography* was also probably illustrated, as the author often refers to these illustrations,[21] and the original manuscript was probably written and illustrated in Alexandria.[22] One scene in the manuscript depicts the conversion of Saint Paul, with two polygonal walled cities filled with buildings in the background. The cities are meant to be Damascus and Jerusalem **(1.18)**.[23] This example might indicate a long tradition of the motif in the Hellenised art of Alexandria, even though the original

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[20] Zsolt Kiss, „Alexandria in the fourth to seventh centuries" in *Egypt in the Byzantine World 300-700,* ed. by Roger S. Bagnall, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.187-206, (p.203).
[21] Dmitrii V. Ainalov, *The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Art,* ed. by Cyril Mango, trans. by Elizabeth and Serge Sobolevitch, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1961), p.25.
[22] Milton V. Anastos, „The Alexandrian Origin of the Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes", *DOP*, 3 (1946), 73-80, (p.76).
Ainalov, pp.49-51.
[23] ibid., p.50-51.

Topography was only written in the sixth century.[24] Biebel suggested an Alexandrian background to the production of both the *Vienna Genesis* and the Gerasa mosaics.[25] The evidence that suggests a connection between Alexandria and the Gerasa mosaics/*Vienna Genesis* illustrations lies in the stylistic similarities of the walled cities in these artefacts with the walled-city motifs in Cosmas" *Topography.*

Alternately, it is possible that the walled-city prototype first entered the east in the region of Syria-Palestine. Weitzmann suggested that the style of the illustrations in the *Vienna Genesis* (and the *Rossano* and *Sinope Gospels*, which also contain walled-city motifs) indicate Syro-Palestinian production.[26] Moreover, if it is accepted that the *Vienna Genesis* predates the Gerasa mosaics and that it also presents walled-city motifs stylistically close to those in the Gerasa mosaics, then this evidence might suggest that the walled-city motif found in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map first entered the east in Syria-Palestine. Further evidence of this possibility is provided by the early fifth-century Nile Festival mosaic in Palestine bearing a walled-city motif **(1.19)**, and the mid-fifth century mosaic featuring walled-city motifs in the Church of the Holy Martyrs at Tayyibat al-Imam in Syria **(1.20)**. Therefore, considering that the earliest eastern manuscripts bearing the walled city motif are datable to the sixth century, the earliest evidence actually comes from the medium of mosaic and points to Syria or Palestine as the walled city-motif"s place of entry into the eastern provinces. Nevertheless, it appears that whichever eastern region or city the motif first entered, the source of the walled-city motifs in both the corpus and Map was the same, because this analysis has revealed no differences between the walled-city prototypes for the corpus as opposed to the Map.

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[24] Kurt Weitzmann, „The Illustration of the Septuagint", in *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. by Herbert L. Kessler, (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp.45-75, (p.55).
Ainalov, pp.49-51.
[25] Biebel, pp.347-348.
[26] Kurt Weitzmann, *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination,* (New York: George Braziller, 1977), p.21.
Kurt Weitzmann, „The Question of the Influence of Jewish Pictorial Sources on Old Testament Illustration", in *Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. by Kessler, pp.76-95, (p.94).

Now that we have questioned *how,* it should be questioned *why* the mosaicists of *Provincia Arabia* adopted the Hellenistic polygonal walled-city motif in the sixth century and then developed it over the next two centuries into the uniquely Arabian style shared by both the Madaba Map and the mosaics of the topographical corpus that post-date the Gerasa mosaics. The topographical and cartographical iconography found in Byzantine-period church pavements in *Provincia Arabia* seems to have largely occurred through a conceptual combination of the Hellenistic walled-city motif and the idea of the depiction of Jerusalem, which was considered to be the Holy centre of the world. Jerusalem was also one of the first cities depicted in churches. For example, it is seen in the fifth century in Rome, in the mosaic in Santa Maria Maggiore (**1.21**). Thereafter, the concept was applied in *Provincia Arabia* to the depiction of other cities, as well as Jerusalem. The depiction of Jerusalem in the mosaic of Santa Maria Maggiore may have been a part of the beginning of a tradition later taken on and developed in Arabian provincial mosaic art, which involved the depiction of numerous eastern cities.[27] The mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Map both contain depictions of Jerusalem and other eastern cities. Therefore, this conclusion indicates that the conceptual motivation for using the walled-city motif in the topographical corpus and the Map was the same.

However, the motivation for the use of the walled-city motif and other topographical motifs in the mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* did not solely come from the early Christian concept of the depiction of Jerusalem. As indicated above, the tradition of topographical depictions was much older. In particular, the long-standing artistic tradition of nilotic landscapes combined with architectonic elements clearly influenced the mosaicists of *Provincia Arabia*, particularly considering that the combination of nilotic and topographical motifs appears in the Church of Saint Stephen, in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, and the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa, *and* the Madaba Map,

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[27] Bianca Kühnel, *From the Earthly to the Heavenly Jerusalem: Representations of the Holy City in Christian Art of the First Millenium,* Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte, Supplementheft 42, (Freiburg: Herder, 1987), p.12.

amongst others.[28] The fact that the combination is found in the varied compositions of the topographical corpus and the cartographical composition of the Madaba Map suggests that both the topographical and cartographical iconographies of *Provincia Arabia* were influenced by nilotic motifs. Therefore, this is another artistic tradition that influenced both the corpus and the Map, and supports that the relationship between them in terms of origins was close.

Therefore, it is proposed that the architectonic motifs of the Arabian topographical mosaic corpus and the Madaba Map were descended from Hellenistic-Roman artistic traditions that include nilotic scenes with architectonic elements, and the Hellenistic walled-city motif, later used to depict Jerusalem in the early Christian period. The combination of nilotic and topographical elements so frequently found in both the corpus and the Madaba Map can be seen earlier in the Praeneste (Palestrina) mosaic. It has been variously dated between 80 B.C. and the third century AD,[29] although it was probably produced in the second half or last quarter of the second century B.C.,[30] or more precisely between 120 and 110 B.C.[31] The mosaic is perhaps best preserved in the seventeenth-century Dal Pozzo copies, as the mosaic itself has been much restored since its discovery. The mosaic portrayed the River Nile as a body of water with ships on its surface and surrounding the buildings in the scene.[32] The mosaic presents a bird"s-eye view of the Nile and probably features a Nilometer **(1.22)**.[33] This evidence indicates that the combination of nilotic and topographical motifs goes back to Roman-period Italy. Meyboom suggested that the temple depicted in the Nile mosaic represented the temple of Osiris at Canopus, because the temple and feasting population depicted would have suggested Canopus to the contemporary viewer. The other scenes in the mosaic

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[28] Michele Piccirillo, „The Mosaics of Jordan", in *The Art of Jordan: Treasures from an Ancient Land*, ed. by Piotr Bienkowski, (Stroud, England: Sutton [and] National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside, 1991), pp.109-132, (p.113).
[29] Helen Whitehouse, „The Dal Pozzo Copies of the Palestrina Mosaic", *BAR Supplementary Series*, 12 (1976), pp.4-5.
[30] Katherine M.D. Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World,* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.49.
[31] Paul G.P. Meyboom, *The Nile Mosaic of Palestrina: Early Evidence of Egyptian Religion in Italy,* Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 121 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), p.19.
[32] Whitehouse, p.1, p.3.
[33] Dunbabin, *Greek and Roman Mosaics*, p.49.

would have been more generally suggestive of the Delta landscape.[34] Therefore, this scene is not just a collection of architectural motifs, but was meant to indicate a specific locality, which connects it with the purpose of the iconographies in both the Arabian topographical corpus and the Madaba Map.

This evidence builds on the conclusions reached in the last section and suggests that at least two components (i.e. the walled-city motif and the nilotic and topographical scenes) of the iconographies in both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map came to the east from the west, perhaps even originally from Italy or *via* Italy, although it is difficult to pinpoint a specific point of origin in the west for either component. However, the Roman-period nilotic scenes and the early Christian walled-city motifs of Santa Maria Maggiore are not the only threads of artistic tradition that contributed to the motifs in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. There are also the architectonic motifs found in late-Roman North Africa and it should be asked what their place is in this tradition that led to the production of the corpus and the Map.

Firstly, we need to establish the artistic connection between these North African mosaics and the topographical corpus/Madaba Map. There are a few late Roman-period North African mosaics which combine marine themes with a townscape and they are related to mosaics of the topographical corpus that also depict a town in its entirety; that is, not simply through a topographical symbol, such as an isolated church. In a mosaic from the Maison d'ʿIsguntus in *Hippo Regius* dated to between the end of the second century and 210/260,[35] is a fishing scene in the foreground, with a collection of buildings on the shore **(1.23)**. In front, there is a group of buildings including what appears to be a basilica with a colonnaded façade, a two-storied building, and several small domed constructions which extend into the sea. The mosaicist may have attempted, with conventional motifs, to portray actual buildings in this scene. Therefore, it may be a depiction of the town of *Hippo*. Evidence in the mosaic

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[34] Meyboom, p.77.
[35] Katherine M.D. Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa: Studies in Iconography and Patronage*, Oxford monographs on classical archaeology, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp.238-239.

for this interpretation is the depiction of the main buildings on the coast, the bridge crossing the river, and the cape later known as the Rocher du Lion. Although this depiction was "exceptional" in North African mosaics according to Dunbabin,[36] the *Hippo* mosaic proves that topographical iconography, even with realistic topographical features, existed in North Africa before its appearance in *Provincia Arabia*. Ultimately though, if the North African topographical iconography was part of the origins of the eastern topographical motifs, then our corpus and the Madaba Map share these origins.

There is also a topographical mosaic from late-Roman North Africa that combines nilotic and topographical iconography, just as is encountered in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. However, this North African mosaic also displays the type of cartographical composition only found in *Provincia Arabia* in the Madaba Map. The mosaic was found in the city of Ammadea-Ammaedara (Haïdra), on the border of Tunisia and Algeria, and displays islands and cities of the Mediterranean. The mosaic has been dated to the end of the third/beginning of the fourth century AD **(1.24)**.[37] All images seem to be conventional architectonic motifs, made particular only by the accompanying toponyms, as is the case with numerous, but not all motifs in the Madaba Map. The space between locations was filled with ocean containing fish and other sea animals, boats, and swimmers.[38] This mosaic used the late-Roman theme of the nilotic landscape and estate placed into a composition which presents the villas as islands accompanied by toponyms that locate them in the Mediterranean. The islands and cities depicted include Scyros, Paphos, Cythera, Erycos, Rhodes, Cyprus, Lemnos, Naxos, Egusa, Knossos, and Idalium.[39] The motifs in the Ammaedara mosaic are a more detailed adaptation of the two-towers-flanking-a-gate motif, which were used in a more simplified form as a topographical

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[36] ibid., pp.128-129.

[37] Fathi Bejaoui, „Decouverte dans l'antique Haidra. La Mediterranee sur une mosaique", *Archeologia,* 357 (1999), 16-23, (p.17, p.23).

[38] Panayiota Assimakopolou-Atzaka, „Fragment of a mosaic with an architectural representation at the Benaki Museum", trans. by Maria Ioannou, *Benaki Museum*, 6 (2006), trans. 1-12, (p.2).

[39] Bejaoui, pp.18-21.

Kai Brodersen, „The presentation of geographical knowledge for travel and transport in the Roman world: itineraria non tantum adnotata sed etiam picta", in *Travel and Geography*, ed. by Adams and Laurence, pp.7-21, (pp.10-11).

symbol for villages in the Madaba Map. There are many major geographical errors in the Ammaedara mosaic, and it is, ultimately, not nearly as topographically accurate as the Madaba Map.[40] Again, we need to note that the motifs, compositions, and the topographical concept appeared in these North African mosaics before their appearance in *Provincia Arabia*. Therefore, it could be concluded that the North African topographical iconography influenced the Arabian topographical corpus *and* the Madaba Map, as the Ammaedara mosaic clearly displays large-scale cartographical relationships, although inaccurate, and the combination of nilotic and topographical iconography found in the corpus and the Madaba Map.

This section demonstrated that the nilotic iconography, walled-city motifs, and topographical concept in the topographical mosaic corpus of *Provincia Arabia*, were derived from the same sources as the nilotic iconography, walled-city motifs, and topographical concept in the Madaba Map. It is *composition* that separates the corpus from the Map. As such, the walled-city motifs, townscapes, and cityscapes, as well as natural geographical features of the Madaba Map were formulated into a fairly accurate representation of the Holy Land and show the cartographical relationships between sites in map form, which no mosaic of the Arabian topographical corpus does.

The walled-city motif and nilotic/topographical iconography originated in the Hellenistic-Roman period and came to the eastern provinces from the Hellenistic-Roman artistic traditions of locations west of *Provincia Arabia*, although a precise point of origin is difficult to isolate. These artistic origins apply to both the corpus and the Madaba Map. Lastly, both the corpus and the Map were also influenced by late-Roman North African topographical mosaics in terms of topographical concept, motifs, and composition, which demonstrate another area in which the relationship between the corpus and Map is close. Ultimately, the motif range and their origins have demonstrated the extent to which the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together.

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[40] Bejaoui, p.22.

1.3 Compositions

As has already been indicated, the major point of separation between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map is in their compositions. However, it is not just that the compositions in the topographical corpus differ from that of the Madaba Map; there is also great compositional variation even within the corpus. Despite this factor, the topographical mosaics only display compositional variations of topographical scenes with none of the cartographical features in map form found in the composition of the Madaba Map. The methodology of the next two sections reflects that of the first two. We start with a discussion of the range of compositions encountered in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, and the degree of cartographical relationships depicted in the compositions of these mosaics. We then analyse the cartographical origins of several of these compositions in the last section in order to demonstrate that it is composition that distances the relationship between the corpus and the Map.

We begin with the mosaic compositions in the topographical corpus that bear no relationship with the cartographical documents of Roman Antiquity, in order to represent the degree of compositional variation in our assemblage. Their relationship with the cartographical tradition lies only in their adaptation of the walled-city motif, which was also used in cartographical documents such as the *Notitia Dignitatum* and *Peutinger Table*. One such mosaic of the Arabian topographical corpus is in the Church of the Priest Waʿʿil at Umm al-Rasas **(1.25)** and the church is dated to 586 by a dedicatory inscription.[41] The topographical scene is located between two columns of the southern side of the central arch and includes three fortified city motifs with four large female figures. These females are possibly meant to represent the Fortunes of the cities and it seems that each city is represented by the symbol of a church, one of the topographical motif categories discussed earlier.[42] In this mosaic programme,

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[41] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.242.
[42] Assimakopolou-Atzaka, pp.5-6.
Michele Piccirillo, „The Activity of the Mosaicists of the Diocese of Madaba at the Time of Bishop Sergius in the Second Half of the Sixth Century", in *SHAJ V: Art and Technology*

there is also is a nilotic scene with boats on the water, fish, and aquatic flowers in a northern intercolumnar space.[43]

The same relationship between cartographical traditions and the composition of the mosaic can be found in the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra (ancient Adeitha) in the region of Bostra. The mosaic can be dated to the tenure of Bishop Theodore of Bostra (634-636)[44] and the tenure of Theodore suggests that the precise construction date was March 635.[45] At the western end of the nave field are two city plans. These cities are depicted with polygonal, crenellated city walls with crenellated towers, and an arched gate between two towers at the front. Inside the walls are edifices with arched windows and domes surmounted with a cross.[46] The lotus flowers in the composition suggest a nilotic scene and refer to the nilotic artistic influence discussed in the last section.[47] However, there is no form of geographical relationship between the two motifs in this mosaic.

Another compositional variant is in the mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat (ancient Mount Nebo). The church can be dated to 557[48] and the style of motif used in the mosaic is stylistically very close to the architectonic motifs seen in the Church of the Priest Wa'il. The building in the panel of Saints Lot and Procopius is a basilical structure with a gabled, red-tiled roof with three towers in the corners. It is located in the centre of the mosaic, with a fisherman sitting on a rock to the right of the structure, and a man rowing a boat filled with amphorae to the left. These figures probably represent

Throughout the Ages, ed. by Adnan Hadidi (Amman: Department of Antiquities, 1995), pp.391-398, (p.395).

[43] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.243.

Michele Piccirillo, „La Chiesa del Prete Wa'il a Umm er-Rasas – Kastron Mefaa in Giordania" in *Early Christianity in context: monuments and documents*, ed. by Frederic Manns and Eugenio Alliata, Collectio maior 38, (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1993), pp.313-334, (p.322, p.331).

[44] Jose Maria Blazquez, „Arte bizantino antiguo de Tradicion Clasica en el Desierto Jordano: Los Mosaicos de Um er Rasas", *Goya,* 255 (1996), 130-145, (p.142).

[45] Robert Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study,* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, 1995), p.79.

[46] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* p.304.

[47] ibid., p.34.

[48] Assimakopolou-Atzaka, p.7.

the toil of the locals, which was common subject matter in Byzantine-period Arabian mosaics.[49] Ultimately, the composition of this panel consists of an isolated topographical architectonic motif set between two other motifs suggestive of the „toil of the locals" iconography popular in Byzantine-period church mosaics in *Provincia Arabia*.[50] As with the Church of the Priest Wa'īl mosaic and the Khirbat al-Samra mosaic, nothing in the composition of this mosaic suggests that a cartographical source was used as a prototype.

Alternately, the composition of the topographical mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen **(1.26)** displays use of a document of the visual itinerary tradition as a prototype. The northern intercolumnar row of the nave contains eight panels depicting cities of Palestine. In the southern intercolumnar row are individual panels depicting cities of *Provincia Arabia*. At the head of each aisle is a depiction of two extra villages: Diblaton and Limbon.[51] With the exception of two cities, the panels are arranged in geographical order, from north to south, and five of the cities depicted were episcopal seats. The nave and side aisles of the Church of Saint Stephen[52] appear to be datable to the eighth century.[53] A similar composition, also datable to the eighth century is found in the topographical border in the Church on the Acropolis at Ma‚īn **(1.27)** (the ancient city of Belemounim), located west of Madaba. There also seems to be some geographical order to the arrangement of cities in the Ma‚īn mosaic, which connect this mosaic to the visual itinerary tradition as well. The sanctuaries of Palestine occupy the right side of the nave, and the composition then descends south until Gaza and from there we pass to Transjordan while going up to the north part of the mosaic.[54] The cartographical traditions of the compositions of the Ma‚īn mosaic, the Saint Stephen mosaic, and the Madaba Map, discussed in

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[49] Sylvester J. Saller and Bellarmino Bagatti, *The Town of Nebo (Khirbet el-Mekhayyat) with a brief survey of other ancient monuments in Transjordan,* Publications of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 7, (Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 1949; repr. 1982), pp.63-64.
[50] ibid., p.78.
[51] Michele Piccirillo, „The Mosaics at Um er-Rasas in Jordan", *BA*, 51, 4 (1988), 208-213+227-231, (p.227).
[52] Blazquez, p.138.
[53] Schick, p.122.
[54] Roland de Vaux, „Une Mosaïque Byzantine", *RB*, 47 (1938), 227-258, (p.241).
Robert Devreesse, *Le Patriarcat d'Antioche: Depuis la Paix de l'Eglise Jusqu'a la Conquête Arabe,* (Paris: J. Gabalda et cie, 1945), p.222.

the next section, display some overlap in terms of prototype, despite the variations in their compositions.

Lastly, the Madaba Map‟s **(1.28)** composition displays the extent to which it stands outside of the Arabian topographical corpus. The Map was found in the Northern Church (or Church of the Map)[55] and was not executed to scale.[56] The Map‟s composition displays the tribal division of the Holy Land[57] and it may be datable towards the end of Justinian‟s reign, around 560-565.[58] The Map accurately displays the relative relationships between sites, but not any measured distances. The Map also displays the relative importance of the sites depicted, not the geometrical relationships between these locations.[59] In its original form, the Madaba Map was a large-scale cartographical depiction of the entire Holy Land from Tyre and Sidon in the north, to the Nile Delta in south, and from the Mediterranean Sea to the desert.[60] The composition of the Madaba Map suggests use of a document of the itinerary map tradition as a prototype.

Ultimately, the aim of this section has been to display the compositional variation in our assemblage and the degree of cartographical relationships depicted in their compositions. The composition of the Madaba Map is unique in the assemblage. The range of topographical mosaics discussed above display a variety of compositions even within the topographical corpus. Nevertheless, all of the compositions within our corpus lack the large-scale cartographical relationships between sites in map form which is encountered in the Map. A common composition in the topographical corpus appears to be a „chain‟ of city motifs. This composition is ordered as a border around the nave in the Church on the Acropolis and the Church of Saint Stephen. However, in the Church of

[55] Michele Piccirillo, „Madaba: One Hundred Years From the Discovery‟ in *Madaba Map Centenary,* ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.15-24, (p.18).

[56] John McRay, „Madeba Map‟ in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. by Everett Ferguson, 2nd edn, (New York; London: Garland Publishing, 1998), pp.703-704, (p.704).

[57] Henri LeClerq, „Madaba‟ in *DACL,* 10 (Paris: R.P Dom Fernand Cabrol et al; Letouzey et Ane, 1907), pp.806-885, (p.819).

[58] McRay, pp.703-704.

[59] Ariel Tishby, „Introduction‟, in *Holy Land in Maps,* ed. by Ariel Tishby, (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum; New York: Rizzoli, 2001), pp.7-11, (p.9).

[60] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* p.27.

the Priest Waʿil, it is ordered as a chain of three city motifs in a panel at the side of the nave.

1.4 Cartographical traditions of the compositions

Some connections must now be established between these compositions and the cartographical documents of Roman Antiquity. Precisely *how* these cartographical traditions came to influence Byzantine-period Arabian mosaicists will be discussed in chapter two, although some preliminary points on this issue are to be made here. Previously, it emerged that not every mosaic of the topographical corpus displays a composition related to a cartographical tradition. It has been demonstrated that only the compositions of three mosaics of the assemblage (including the Madaba Map) can be connected with cartographical documents. The two topographical mosaics are in the Church on the Acropolis and the Church of Saint Stephen. This section therefore asks about the relationship between these two topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map, and the relationship between these three mosaics and the rest of the assemblage. The cartographical documents connected with the compositions of the Maʿin mosaic, Saint Stephen mosaic, and Madaba Map are itineraries and the *Notitia Dignitatum*. Although it cannot be verified that the mosaicists of Byzantine-period *Provincia Arabia* drew upon itineraries or the *Notitia*, there are three main reasons that these traditions are proposed as the cartographical sources of the Saint Stephen mosaic, the Maʿin mosaic, and the Map.

Firstly, these Roman cartographical traditions precede our assemblage. Therefore, it is possible, at least chronologically, that Arabian mosaicists had access to a form of the traditions. Secondly, the movement of the Hellenistic walled-city motif from the west to Syria/Palestine or Alexandria and finally to *Provincia Arabia*, suggests that the transmission route of the cartographical traditions might have also been from the west (where the itineraries discussed here and the *Notitia* originated) to *Provincia Arabia*.[61] Finally, the following

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[61] Support for the western provenance of the cartographical sources discussed here can be found in a number of areas. The *Peutinger Table* was created from Roman itinerary lists, displaying about 70000 Roman miles of Roman roads, hundreds of Roman sites with their Roman names, and

cartographical traditions behind the two topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map are proposed because of the compositional similarities between these sources and the mosaics. The compositional aspects of the following cartographical sources were possibly transmitted to *Provincia Arabia* in pattern books, manuscript copies, or other transmission modes.[62]

We begin with the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which presents us with a cartographical precedent to the mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis and the Church of Saint Stephen. The manuscript, like the compositions of the Ma„in and Saint Stephen mosaics, is a visual „list‟ of cities, organised according to province, although it is not an itinerary,[63] and the topographical accuracy of its illustrations is greatly flawed.[64] The *Notitia* is a list of civilian and military office holders and administration, accompanied by maps of the relevant locations. The *Notitia* can probably be dated between AD 395[65] and 413,[66] but Mann suggested that it was collated after 395 and brought up to date up to around 408.[67] Nevertheless, the

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distances between sites recorded mainly in Roman miles. This evidence might suggest Roman provenance.

Emily Albu, „Rethinking the Peutinger Map‟, in *Cartography in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Fresh Perspectives, New Methods*, ed. by Richard J.A. Talbert and Richard W. Unger, (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), pp.111-119, (p.111).

Moreover, the *Peutinger Table* displays the seated personification of Rome at the vertical and horizontal centre. Salway indicated that the medieval copies of the *Table* had a narrow circulation around the middle and upper Rhine valley. He then seems to imply (but is ultimately unclear) about the fact that the only forests depicted and named on the *Table* are in this region (*silva Vosagus* and *silva Marciana*). This evidence supports a provenance in the western provinces, but detracts from the likelihood that this provenance was Rome.

Salway, *Travel, itineraria and tabellaria*, p.22, p.26.

As for the *Notitia Dignitatum,* its illustrations are thought to be western, because the best parallel is found in the art of fourth-fifth century Rome.

J.J.G. Alexander, „The illustrated manuscripts of the Notitia Dignitatum‟, in *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum: Papers presented to the conference in Oxford, December 13 to 15, 1974*, ed. by Roger Goodburn and Philip Bartholomew, (= *BAR Supplementary Series* 15, (1976)), pp.11-49, (p.17).

Further proof of the western provenance and origins of the itinerary tradition in general is provided by the fact that itineraries are part of a wider Roman tradition, which also includes the Ravenna Cosmography, Antonine Itinerary, *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, Vicarello Goblets, (Dilke, *Itineraries*, p.235) and also the itinerary on a plaque from the columbarium at the *Vigna Codini*, south-east Rome.

Salway, *Travel, Itineraria and Tabellaria*, p.26.

[62] Chapter 2.4, pp.70-71.
[63] Salway, *Travel, Itineraria and Tabellaria*, pp.27-28.
[64] Dilke, *Itineraries*, p.245.
[65] Harvey, *Topographical Maps*, pp.53-54.
[66] Dilke, *Itineraries*, pp.244-245.
[67] John C. Mann, „What was the Notitia Dignitatum for?‟ in *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum*, ed. by Goodburn and Bartholomew, pp.1-9, (p.8).

maps in the *Notitia* do contain some topographically accurate features, such as the course of the *Euphrates*. However, it is mainly the text of the *Notitia*, rather than its maps, which provides accurate topographical information.[68]

One of the maps in the *Notitia Dignitatum* bears very similar content to the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen. The relevant *Notitia* map is of the River Jordan, situated between the towns under the *Dux Palaestinae*.[69] Similarly, the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen depicts the cities of Palestine and Egypt in the form of separate panels and the cities of Palestine and *Provincia Arabia* are organised according to their position on either side of the River Jordan. Ultimately, whether the *Notitia* was available to the Saint Stephen mosaicist or not is unverifiable, but the compositional similarity between the two artefacts *suggests* that this document, the *Notitia Dignitatum*, was directly or indirectly known to the patrons and/or artists/craftsmen of the Saint Stephen mosaic. However, the exact composition of the Saint Stephen and Ma‚in mosaics, composed of panels of towns forming a basically geographically-accurate border around a rectangular central field of the nave, is not reflected in any of the topographical illuminations in the *Notitia.* The *Notitia* illuminations display clusters of walled-city motifs organised according to province. Therefore, it is proposed that the connection between these mosaics and the *Notitia* is conceptual, because the composition of towns in the *Notitia* is not identical to the composition of towns in the Saint Stephen or Ma‚in mosaics. However, both the mosaics and the *Notitia* display motifs of towns organised in basically geographically-accurate groups, but not in map-form cartographical relationships to each other. Both were composed as a visual „list" of cities.

For this proposal to be possible, copies of a manuscript such as the *Notitia* or elements of this sort of composition may have made its way to *Provincia Arabia* in pattern books or other transmission modes. It is sufficient for the present to address some problems with the possibility that the *Notitia* influenced the patrons and/or artists/craftsmen of the Church of Saint Stephen in their choice of

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[68] Oswald Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), pp.167-169.
[69] *Notitia Dignitatum accedunt Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae et Latercula Provinciarum*, ed. by Otto Seeck, 2nd edn, (Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1962), p.72.

mosaic subject matter and composition. Therefore, in order to assert that the compositions of the Saint Stephen and Ma„in mosaics were conceptually inspired by the illustrations of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, we must assess whether the illustrated manuscripts we now have are representative of the illustrations that the Umayyad-period eastern artist/craftsman or workshop had access to. The five manuscripts of the *Notitia* made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which were derived from the early tenth-century *Codex Spirensis*, display some very different illustrations from other members of the manuscript corpus.[70] This fact suggests that some of the extant illustrations in the current *Notitia* were added at various times, but does not disprove that the walled-city compositions denoting provinces were around to be seen by the eighth-century artists/craftsmen of the east. Therefore, it remains possible that a form of the *Notitia* illustrations were in existence to be seen by Arabian mosaicists of the eighth century.

That the illustrations of the *Notitia* were around to influence the mosaicists of eighth century Ma„in and Umm al-Rasas is further suggested by J.J.G. Alexander‟s theory that the illustrations in the extant *Notitia* were copies of the late Antique series, because of their close links with the text. Alexander found the closest parallels with these illustrations in fifth-century Western art (particularly the art of Rome).[71] Therefore, it appears that the *Notitia* illustrations were in existence around three centuries before the production of the mosaics at Ma„in and in the Church of Saint Stephen. Nevertheless, the evidence presented in favour of the possibility that the illustrations of the *Notitia* influenced the mosaicists of the Ma„in and Saint Stephen mosaics cannot verify that these mosaicists had access to the *Notitia* itself, only that it was chronologically, geographically, and compositionally possible that the *Notitia* tradition influenced them. It is also possible that the illustrations of the *Notitia* were reproduced in other manuscripts, or even pattern books, and that it was a transmission mode such as this that was known to the patrons and mosaicists of *Provincia Arabia*, rather than a copy of the *Notitia* itself. The Saint Stephen and

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[70] I.G Maier, „The Giessen, Parma and Piacenza codices of the „Notitia Dignitatum‟ with some related Texts‟, *Latomus,* 27 (1968), pp.96-141, (pp.98-100, pp.134-135, p.137).
[71] Alexander, pp.17-18.

Ma,in mosaic compositions can also be related to the itinerary tradition and we come to this cartographical form next.

The cartographical tradition of the visual itinerary may have also influenced the topographical mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis and the Church of Saint Stephen. Moreover, providing a compositional connection between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, this cartographical tradition also influenced the composition of the Madaba Map. The Roman itinerary functioned as a list of locations intended to guide the traveller on a journey to a location.[72] Specifically, the Roman *visual* itinerary displays relational rather than geometrically-accurate connections between sites, and displays these cartographical relationships as a list, visual or written, rather than as a map. Despite this fact, and that the Madaba Map *does* take the form of a map, these three mosaics were at least partially based on itinerary prototypes.

The Saint Stephen and Ma,in mosaics were based on the concept of a visual „list" of cities, organised according to the geographical relationships between these cities. One visual itinerary that reflects these elements is the Dura Europos shield **(1.29)**. In 1923, a fragment of parchment decorated with a map was found at Dura Europos. The map was intended to cover an infantryman"s shield and is datable to the years immediately prior to AD 260.[73] The sea depicted in the parchment contains two disproportionately large ships and four men"s heads. On or near the coast are staging posts depicted as houses. The posts and the primary rivers on the shield were labelled alongside partly preserved mileages given after the towns.[74] Overall, the shield contains some degree of cartographical accuracy because the Black Sea is depicted from modern Bulgaria to the Crimea.[75]

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[72] Salway, *Travel, Itineraria and Tabellaria*, p.22, p.27.
Dilke, *Itineraries*, p.254.
[73] Benet Salway, „Sea and River Travel in the Roman Itinerary Literature", in *Space in the Roman World: Its Perception and Presentation,* ed. by Richard Talbert and Kai Brodersen, Antike Kultur und Geschichte 5, (Münster: LIT; Piscataway, NJ: Distributed in North America by Transaction Publishers, 2004), pp.43-96, (pp.92-93).
[74] Franz Cumont, „Fragment de bouclier portant une liste d"etapes", *Syria,* 6 (1925), 1-15, (p.3).
Rene Rebuffat, „Le Bouclier de Doura", *Syria T.63 Fasc ½* (1986), 85-105, (p.93).
Franz Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos 1922-1923,* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1926), p.325, pp.323-337.
[75] Salway, *Sea and River*, p.94.

Moreover, the shield is a fairly reliable source of information on the northwest coast of the Black Sea, and east of that, it is more cartographically reliable than was previously thought.[76] The language of the map is Greek, and the fragment contains depictions of ships, which suggests that the shield was not an official Roman military map, but instead copied from one.[77] The sequence of towns in the Dura Europos shield displays compositional similarity to the mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis and the Church of Saint Stephen. This compositional similarity is found in the sequence or „chain" of towns depicted architectonically and ordered according to basic geographical accuracy. Therefore, it can be concluded that itineraries like the Dura Europos shield conceptually influenced the Ma„in and Saint Stephen mosaics.

However, an ordinary itinerary listed place names along the road. Next to the road, the mileages between the locations were recorded.[78] Roads and mileages are not present in the mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis or the Church of Saint Stephen. The fact that these elements are missing from the two mosaics suggests further that the nature of the relationship between the compositions of these mosaics and this visual itinerary was only conceptual, and that the mosaicists of the Ma„in and Saint Stephen mosaics adapted the cartographical sources to the requirements of their patrons. This adaptation indicates that the patron did not require detail in the mosaics that would give them a cartographical function. Therefore, it is proposed that the Ma„in and Saint Stephen mosaics were conceptually based on the visual itinerary tradition, of which the Dura Europos shield is a good example, if not the actual artefact known to the artists/craftsmen and/or patrons of these two mosaics. It is possible that the itinerary tradition, and specifically, a prototype of the composition of the Dura Europos shield, was transmitted in a mobile form, such as in a manuscript

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[76] Dilke, *Itineraries*, p.249.
[77] Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps*, pp.120-122.
Dilke, *Itineraries*, p.249.
Pascal Arnaud, „Une deuxieme lecture du "bouclier" de Doura-Europos", *Comptes rendus des seances de l'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Annee 1989,* 133, 2 (1989), pp.373-389, (pp.384-385).
[78] Israel Roll, „The Roads in Roman-Byzantine Palaestina and Arabia" in *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.109-113, (pp.109-110).

or pattern book, and communicated as a composition to *Provincia Arabia* in this manner, as was suggested for the *Notitia*.

We now move on to the compositional prototypes of the Madaba Map. Therefore, the next visual itinerary document is the *Peutinger Table*, which provides the concept of space by displaying the relative distances and relationships between sites in map form, just as the Madaba Map conveys the concept of space.[79] The *Peutinger Table* displays a composition that cannot be connected with any other Arabian mosaic but the Madaba Map. The *Peutinger Table* presents the Roman Empire, covered with a variety of city and topographical motifs found in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, including the two-towers-flanking-a-gate motif and the Hellenistic polygonal walled-city motif. The *Table* has often been compared to the Madaba Map and suggested as a possible influence on it.[80] In this thesis, it is considered that the *Peutinger Table* had an influence specifically on the composition of the Madaba Map because of the compositional and motif connections between these two artefacts.

The *Table* is currently divided into twelve sections, but only eleven survive. Originally, the map was a long and narrow parchment roll, measuring 6.75m x 34cm. The extant map is a copy made between the eleventh and early-thirteenth centuries[81] from the original, probably datable to the fifth century AD[82] and copied a number of times between the fifth and twelfth centuries. Therefore, it was probably not the original fifth-century version that the twelfth-thirteenth century copyist worked from.[83] Albu suggested that the original map was actually Carolingian, rather than from the late-Roman period, and this theory

[79] Dilke, *Itineraries*, pp.238-242.
Salway, *Travel, itineraria and tabellaria*, pp.22-26.
[80] Ekkehard Weber, „The Tabula Peutingeriana and the Madaba Map" in *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.41-46, (pp.43-46).
[81] Paul D.A. Harvey, *Medieval Maps*, (London: British Library, 1991), p.12
[82] Norman J.W.Thrower, *Maps and Civilization: Cartography in Culture and Society,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p.39.
Richard Talbert, „Cartography and Taste in Peutinger's Roman Map", in *Space in the Roman World*, ed. by Talbert and Brodersen, pp.113-141, (pp.117-118).
[83] Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps*, p.113.
Soren Giversen, „The Madaba Map in the History of Cartography" in *Madaba Map Centenary,* ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.248-250, (p.249).

would exclude the possibility that the *Peutinger Table* was a part of the tradition that influenced the composition of the Madaba Map, as they would then post-date the Map. However, even if we do accept Albu‟s argument, she also acknowledged that the map was compiled from Roman itineraries.[84] And, given that pictorial mapping was well-known in the Roman world, there is no reason why the original *Table* was not executed in the fifth century. Therefore, the theory in this thesis is that the original *Table* was produced in the fifth century[85] and was in existence before the production of the Madaba Map.

We should now ask about the specific relationship between the *Peutinger Table* and the Madaba Map. The *Peutinger Table* is compositionally similar to the Madaba Map (despite the *Peutinger Table*‟s use of city personifications and depiction of roads), as both depict the cartographical relationships between natural and man-made locations with no scale or precise topographical detail.[86] However, unlike the Madaba Map, the *Table* displays the distances along the roads between sites, which is the factor that renders the *Peutinger Table* a visual itinerary and indicates that, if we accept the link between the two, the Madaba Map used a visual itinerary as a source, rather than being one itself. The same observation can be made of the Saint Stephen and Ma‟in mosaics. The composition of the Madaba Map, with its sites located along road systems, suggests that it was largely based on a visual itinerary, but specifically one in the form of a road map, like the *Table*.[87]

However, unlike the *Table*, the Madaba Map does not actually depict more than one road, possibly because the artist/craftsman of the Map felt that roads would obscure the toponyms and inscriptions of the mosaic.[88] Therefore, the compositional and motif similarities between the *Peutinger Table* and the Madaba Map suggest that this document, or at least a similar document from the

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[84] Albu, *Imperial Geography*, pp.136-137.
[85] Weber, p.43.
[86] Israel Finkelstein, „The Holy Land in the Tabula Peutingeriana: A Historical-Geographical Approach‟, *PEQ*, 111 (1979), pp.27-34, (p.27).
[87] Roll, p.112.
[88] Herbert Donner, „The Uniqueness of the Madaba Map and its Restoration in 1965‟, *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.37-40, (p.37).

same genre, was known to the patrons and/or the artists/craftsmen of the Madaba Map and perhaps even inspired its composition. However, whereas distances and roads were integral to the function of the *Peutinger Table*, they were not to the function of the Madaba Map, and so the patron and/or artist/craftsman made the necessary compositional adaptations. The patron/s of the Madaba Map were probably also very learned, considering the library the mosaicists were given access to and the concepts encapsulated in the mosaic.[89] Therefore, it is also probable that the patron/s of the Map were familiar (perhaps even from their travels) with the visual itinerary in road-map form, as exemplified by the *Peutinger Table*.

Ultimately, different types of itinerary influenced the compositions of the Ma‚in mosaic, the Saint Stephen mosaic, and the Madaba Map. The Saint Stephen and Ma‚in mosaics display a visual „list" of cities in a basically geographically-accurate sequence, like the Dura Europos shield, while the Madaba Map displays the cartographical relationships between the sites of the region like the *Peutinger Table*. It is this concept of a visual „list" of cities that also relates the composition of the Saint Stephen and Ma‚in mosaics to the illustrations of the *Notitia Dignitatum*. Ultimately, only two mosaics of the topographical corpus can be related to the cartographical artefacts of Roman Antiquity, alongside the Madaba Map. The implication of this is that the relationship between these two topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map is closer in terms of compositional origins, than the relationship between these three mosaics and any other mosaic of the assemblage in this regard. Moreover, in the sense that the compositions of the Ma‚in and Saint Stephen mosaics were at least partially based on Roman cartographical sources, we can call these mosaics cartographical, like the Madaba Map. However, according to the definition of a „cartographical mosaic" outlined in the Introduction, which requires a cartographical composition in map form, they are not, and the Madaba Map continues to stand as the only cartographical mosaic in Byzantine-Umayyad period *Provincia Arabia*. In essence, just because the compositions of these two topographical mosaics

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[89] Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Madaba Mosaic Map with Introduction and Commentary,* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1954), pp.31-32.

utilised, like the Madaba Map, cartographical sources, does not mean that the end results are cartographical mosaics.

Conclusions

This chapter demonstrated that the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map is close in terms of motifs, but largely dissimilar in terms of composition. Both the Arabian topographical mosaic corpus and the Madaba Map display the same range of architectonic motifs, and drew from the Hellenistic polygonal walled-city motif, nilotic iconography, and the North African topographical iconography in terms of their conceptual and motif origins. Therefore, in terms of motif range and origins, the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together.

However, the *compositions* of only two mosaics in the topographical corpus (and the Madaba Map) can be connected with the cartographical traditions of Roman Antiquity and yet even here, the compositional connections between these two mosaics and the Madaba Map are tenuous. The compositions of the topographical mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis and the Church of Saint Stephen reflect the use of visual itineraries as a source, and possibly an artefact like the Dura Europos shield, combined with Hellenistic walled-city motifs, and other architectonic motifs. These itinerary origins also apply to the Madaba Map, which was largely based on the itinerary map tradition (a document like the *Peutinger Table*), and also contains walled-city motifs and other architectonic motifs. Nevertheless, the manner in which the concept is translated into a composition in the Ma,in and Saint Stephen mosaics on the one hand and in the Map on the other, is entirely different, as reflected in the different compositions of the Dura Europos shield and the *Peutinger Table*. In addition, these three mosaics seem to be unrelated to the rest of the assemblage in terms of the use of cartographical compositional prototypes. However, the Ma,in and Saint Stephen mosaics, as well as the other mosaics of the corpus, contain motifs similar to those in the Madaba Map, such as variations of the walled-city motif, which emphasises the nature of the relationship between the corpus and the Madaba Map in that it is compositional, rather than motif differences that set them apart.

CHAPTER TWO
DATING AND PROVENANCE

One of the criteria for discussing the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map in the first place was that they share the same chronological and geographical parameters. This chapter discusses those criteria in order to establish the nature of the relationship in this regard. We open with a discussion of the common dating issues affecting the corpus and the Map. This analysis verifies that they both emerged between the sixth and eighth centuries and therefore, we ask what this common dating means about the relationship between the corpus and the Map. The following discussion of provenance involves analysis of the mosaic workshops that produced our assemblage, contextualised first by a survey of these mosaics" geographical distribution. This analysis is closely linked to chronological issues and introduces the possibility that a workshop responsible for the production of mosaics in the topographical corpus might have also produced the Madaba Map. Therefore, this area is yet another in which we can relate the corpus to the Map.

These verifications of the shared chronological and geographical parameters of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map lead to more complex provenance issues, such as *how* the artistic and cartographical origins discussed in the last chapter were actually transmitted to the patrons and artists/craftsmen of *Provincia Arabia*. We begin with the transmission routes (from North Africa to Syria/Palestine and finally to *Provincia Arabia*), and then move on to the transmission modes. The discussion of the transmission modes deals with items such as pattern books and investigates the role of other transmission modes within the context of Byzantine-period *Provincia Arabia*. This section might appear out of place in this chapter, but is located here because of its close connections with the previous section on the transmission route of the artistic origins of the corpus and the Map. The question here is: what do these transmission routes and processes

communicate about the relationship between the corpus and the Map? Lastly, we conclude with an analysis of the artistic character of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. This discussion deals with the provenance of that artistic character and asks whether it was ultimately „Arabian". Composition does not have any bearing on most of the issues discussed in this chapter; therefore, we ask how this element will affect our assessment of the relationship between the corpus and the Map in regard to the issues raised.

2.1 Chronological issues

This section investigates the basis on which common chronological parameters are attributed to the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, in order to confirm that the corpus and Map share the same chronological parameters and to ascertain the nature of their relationship in this regard. The established dating for the assemblage is between the sixth and eighth centuries and this common dating was one of the criteria for discussing the relationship between the corpus and the Map in the first place. The evidence on which these mosaics are attributed to the sixth to the eighth centuries is reviewed in order to verify that this dating is correct. The dating evidence reviewed consists of mosaic inscriptions, stylistic and internal historical evidence, and architectural context. The mosaics chosen for review are only those that pose some problems or ambiguity in terms of their dating. The other mosaics of the assemblage, which are not included in the following discussion, are able to be unambiguously attributed to the sixth to eighth centuries.

A number of mosaics in the assemblage are accompanied by inscriptions that allow the mosaic, or the church in which it is placed, to be dated. The date of mosaics accompanied by inscriptions from Byzantine-period *Provincia*

Arabia is calculable through three elements:[1] the name of the month, the year of the indiction, and the year of the era of Bostra. Unfortunately however, these inscriptions are occasionally unclear about whether they are contemporary with the church building, or only the mosaics, or are commemorating new amenities for the church.[2] Alternately, some inscriptions do specify the part of the church or decoration being commemorated.[3] Therefore, an inscription cannot be used to date any part of the church or its decoration unless it is specific about which addition or construction is being commemorated.

Some of the ambiguities that can arise, even with dated inscriptions, can be seen in the mosaic in the Church on the Acropolis. De Vaux thought that the inscription date of 719-20 in the Church on the Acropolis referred to a restoration of the mosaic, rather than the original, due to the onset of a provincial iconoclastic movement in the region. Therefore, de Vaux dated the original nave pavement to between the end of the sixth century and before the middle of the seventh century. However, Piccirillo examined the pavement and assessed that the *tabula ansata* bearing the date was part of the original work, as Bagatti had suggested in 1949,[4] because the motifs added to the pavement later are obvious.[5] This evidence indicates that the topographical part of this mosaic is datable to 719-20; the date provided in the inscription. Therefore, it is clear that this mosaic of the topographical corpus can be attributed to the eighth century, which is within the established chronological parameters.

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[1] Michele Piccirillo, The Umayyad Churches of Jordan", *ADAJ*, 28 (1984), 333-342, (p.334, p.338).
[2] Pierre-Louis Gatier, „Les Mosaiques Paleochretiennes de Jordanie et l‟histoire de l‟Arabie Byzantine", in *Les Eglises de Jordanie et leurs Mosaïques*, ed. by Duval, pp.289-295, (p.292).
[3] Noël Duval, „Architecture et Liturgie dans la Jordanie Byzantine" in *Les Eglises de Jordanie et leurs Mosaïques*, ed. by Duval, pp.35-114, (p.36).
[4] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.36.
[5] Piccirillo, *Umayyad Churches*, p.334.

Errors are another complication that can arise in the mosaic inscriptions of our assemblage. A dating problem is presented by an error in an inscription in the Church of Saint Stephen. Inscription No. 4 in this church was found in the extremity of the central nave before the chancel and states that the mosaic was finished in October, in the second year of the indiction, in the year 680 of the Province of Arabia under Bishop Sergius. This year could correspond to October AD 785. However, there is a problem with the two dating systems in this inscription: the indiction and era of the province. October 785 would have been the ninth year of the indiction, not the second. Therefore, this discrepancy indicates that the year 785 is not acceptable.[6] There is another possibility. The name *Lexiou* (genitive) in this inscription is also found in two other pavements in the Church of Saint Stephen, one dated to 756. The three eighth-century dates before 756 that correspond with the second indiction are 718, 733, and 748.[7] Therefore, Schick‟s suggestion was that the nave mosaics of Saint Stephen were dated to 718.[8] This evidence suggests that the topographical nave border in the Church of Saint Stephen was an eighth-century product, dated to before 756, if not precisely datable to 718 and this evidence therefore further suggests that the established chronological parameters of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map are accurate.

Unfortunately, the mosaic in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul contains no extant dated inscription, so other, less reliable evidence must be used to date it. Therefore, stylistic, architectural, and internal evidence dates the church and its mosaics. The architectural plan of the church, with three apses and the size of its chancel, is similar to the Church of Procopius at Gerasa, dated 526-527, which might suggest a similar date for the Church of Saints Peter and Paul. The style and content of the mosaics in this church, with scroll border

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[6] Gatier, p.294.
Robert L. Wilken, „Byzantine Palestine: A Christian Holy Land‟, *BA*, 51, 4 (1988), 214-217+233-237, (p.236).
Piccirillo, *Mosaics at Um er-Rasas in Jordan*, p.213.
[7] Gatier, p.294.
[8] Schick, pp.472-473.

and topographical subject matter, also relate it closely to the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa (no later than 531 on the basis of inscriptions).[9] However, the rendering of towns in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul mosaic are of lesser quality than in the Church of Saint John the Baptist mosaic, which led Crowfoot to the conclusion that the Church of Saints Peter and Paul was later than the Church of Saint John the Baptist. The "miscellaneous" character of the architecture supported Crowfoot's conclusion, but this conclusion is flawed.

On the basis of Crowfoot's assumption that lesser quality equates to later period, he assessed that the date of the Church of Saints Peter and Paul was around 540.[10] However, 540 would have fallen within a period when Gerasa was still economically and culturally prosperous. Why then would seven years make a difference to the quality of the church architecture and mosaics? It would not. Either the Church of Saints Peter and Paul is datable to much later, after the artistic „renaissance" of Justinian's reign, or, there is a different reason for the lesser quality of the architecture and mosaics in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul. One reason might be that fewer funds were available for the construction and decoration of the Church of Saints Peter and Paul. However, the stylistic, internal, and architectural evidence reviewed suggests that the topographical mosaic in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul was datable to around the middle of the sixth century, which is within the chronological parameters established earlier for the entire assemblage.

The Madaba Map is also unaccompanied by a dated inscription. However, the stylistic evidence suggests that it was produced in the latter half of the sixth or early seventh century. O'Callaghan stylistically compared the Madaba

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[9] Charles B. Welles, „Christian Buildings", in *Gerasa,* ed. by Kraeling, pp.473-488, (pp.479-480, p.484).
[10] John W. Crowfoot, „The Christian Churches", in *Gerasa,* ed. by Kraeling, pp.171-262, (p.251).

Map to the mosaic in the Church of the Apostles at Madaba, dated to 578.[11] This interpretation suggests that the Madaba Map could be dated to the latter part of the sixth century. Moreover, Piccirillo proposed that the style of tesserae cutting and laying, as well as colour effects of the mosaic placed the Madaba Map in the last decades of the sixth century or the beginning of the seventh century.[12] However, there is great similarity between the depiction of buildings in the Madaba Map and in the mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat.[13] This similarity could indicate that the Madaba Map was executed nearer to the time of the Saints Lot and Procopius mosaic in 557, but not necessarily. Alternately, the similarity might indicate that the same workshop was responsible for both mosaics, and that this workshop continued its stylistic traditions into the seventh century. Therefore, the stylistic similarity between the Madaba Map and a clearly-dated mosaic, such as the Saints Lot and Procopius mosaic, is far from conclusive dating evidence, because some mosaic workshops may have continued using the same stylistic traditions for generations.

More reliable than stylistic evidence is the internal historical evidence in the Madaba Map. This evidence also supports that the Madaba Map is datable to the latter half of the sixth century or beginning of the seventh century. The depiction of the *Nea Theotokos* in the Jerusalem vignette provides a *terminus post quem* for the Madaba Map. As the *Nea Theotokos* was inaugurated in 542-543, the Map must have been executed after that.[14] In conjunction with the presence of the *Nea,* the second half of the sixth century was a time of a flourishing mosaic industry in or near Madaba, which further suggests that the Madaba Map should be dated to the second half of the sixth century. There is another piece of internal evidence in the Madaba Map - a depiction of a church at the entrance to Saint Lot‟s Cave near Zo‟ar (es-Safi). A church

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[11] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.96.
[12] Piccirillo, *One Hundred Years*, p.22.
[13] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.34.
[14] ibid., p.29.

in this exact location was excavated and a mosaic inscription found in it indicates that it was built in 604. This date might provide a later *terminus post quem* for the Madaba Map in the early-seventh century.[15] However, this piece of evidence is not entirely reliable as a dating method, because the Madaba Map might depict an earlier church built on that site.[16] Additional internal evidence for the late-sixth/early-seventh century date of the Madaba Map is supplied by the presence of four churches in the mosaic that were first mentioned by the Anonymous of Piacenza (shortly after 570). These were the churches of: Galgala, the Egyptian Martyrs near Ascalon, Saint Victor near Gaza, and Zacharias. As such, Donner proposed that 542 (or rather, closer to 570) was the *terminus post quem* of the Madaba Map, with the Persian attack on Palestine under Chosroes II in 614 as its *terminus ante quem*.[17] Ultimately, the pieces of evidence reviewed support each other and suggest that the Madaba Map can be dated to between the second half of the sixth century and the beginning of the seventh, which is within the chronological parameters established for the entire assemblage.

The inscriptional, stylistic, architectural, and internal historical evidence reviewed in this section verified that both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map are datable to between the sixth and eighth centuries, as was part of the criteria for the analysis of the relationship between the corpus and the Madaba Map. This verification was achieved by a review of those mosaics of the assemblage which are ambiguous in terms of their date. A number of Arabian topographical mosaics are dated by inscriptions, some of which are not clear about which part of the church was being commemorated. However, the mosaic in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul and the Madaba Map are not accompanied by inscriptions, so other evidence was used to date them, such as stylistic, architectural, and internal elements. This section

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[15] Piccirillo, *One Hundred Years,* p.22.
[16] Yoram Tsafrir, „Maps of the Land of Israel: The Madaba Map, 6th Century CE‟ in *Holy Land in Maps*, ed. by Tishby, pp.66-69, (p.68).
[17] Donner, *Mosaic Map,* p.14.

required each mosaic, whether topographical or cartographical, to be dated individually, and on the basis of the specific type of dating evidence it offered, rather than its composition. Therefore, this section displayed an area of very close relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, to the extent that they have been categorised together here.

2.2 Mosaic workshops in *Provincia Arabia*

This section expands on another of the criteria for the existence of a relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, and that is their shared geographical distribution. This discussion will provide a context for the analysis of the distribution of mosaic workshops in *Provincia Arabia*. The Madaba Map is again categorised with the topographical corpus here because they are both distributed within *Provincia Arabia*, and more often, in and around Madaba. In this section, chronological issues are also inextricable from provenance. As such, the distribution of mosaic workshops *in this period* affects the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map equally and helps to provide an indication of whether the workshop responsible for one or more mosaics of the topographical corpus might have also produced the Madaba Map. This assessment however, is also achieved by stylistic analysis and this area is another that carries implications for the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map.

We begin with an indication of the geography of *Provincia Arabia* in order to contextualise the geographical distribution of the corpus and the Madaba Map (**map 1**). *Provincia Arabia* was located in modern Jordan and in the Byzantine period, modern Jordan was divided into four Imperial provinces: *Provincia Arabia*, with Bostra (now in Syria) as its metropolis. The diocesan territory reached south to the modern Jordanian border and included the regions of Philadelphia-Amman, Madaba, Esbus, Gerasa, and up to the Wadi Mujib-Arnon. South of the Arnon was the region of *Palaestina Tertia*. The territory between *Provincia Arabia* and the River Jordan formed *Palaestina*

Prima and in the north was *Palaestina Secunda*.[18] The geographical area of *Provincia Arabia* that best displays the mosaic distribution ranges from the River Yarmuk and Wadi Mujib-Arnon, and from the River Jordan to the steppe. The territory of Madaba enveloped a large quantity of the topographical corpus, as well as the Madaba Map, and this fact, therefore, allows them to be categorised together in this regard. The territory of Madaba extended west to Mount Nebo and south to the Wadi Mujib Arnon, which creates a natural boundary between *Provincia Arabia* and *Palaestina Tertia*. The territory also reached Ma„in in the south-west, which was home to one of the latest extant topographical mosaics in the Church on the Acropolis. In the north was Madaba‟s boundary with the diocese of Esbus.[19] A number of topographical mosaics were found in churches in and around the outlying parts of Madaba, such as at Umm al-Rasas, only located 30 km south-east of Madaba and home to four churches adorned with topographical mosaics.[20] Therefore, the characteristics of Byzantine-period Arabian topographical/cartographical mosaics are best seen in the diocese of Madaba.

The overview of the geographical distribution of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map contextualises the discussion of the distribution of mosaic workshops in *Provincia Arabia* and how this distribution affects the relationship between the corpus and the Map. There are two main issues in this section: schools of mosaicists and the locations of the relevant Byzantine-period Arabian workshops, which is an issue that is particularly connected to the previous discussion of the geographical distribution of the mosaics.

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[18] Piccirillo, *Art of Jordan*, p.110.
[19] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.43.
[20] Michele Piccirillo and Taysir Attiyat, „The Complex of Saint Stephen at Umm er-Rasas – Kastron Mefaa: First Campaign, August 1986‟ *ADAJ*, 30 (1986), 341-351, (p.343).
Michele Piccirillo and Eugenio Alliata, „Introduzione‟, in *Umm al-Rasas Mayfa'ah I: Gli Scavi del Complesso di Santo Stefano*, ed. by Michele Piccirillo and Eugenio Alliata, (Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 1994), pp.9-11, (pp.9-10).

It is considered in this thesis that a mosaic „school" denotes a set of workshops propagating a similar style.[21] The issue of „schools" of mosaicists affects the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, not according to whether the mosaic bears topographical or cartographical iconography, but according to the geographical location of that mosaic and the dominating artistic influences of the „school" of that region. In regard to the „schools" of *Provincia Arabia*, there is archaeological evidence that suggests that in the fifth century, the mosaic workshops of different regions in *Provincia Arabia* found distinct styles. The mosaicists of Gerasa used geometric patterns and the rainbow style, whereas in Esbus and Madaba, these geometric motifs were accompanied by figurative motifs.[22] In the sixth century, the regional artistic differences continued. The workshops from Madaba to Philadelphia-Amman preferred figural compositions, whereas the workshops of Gerasa and the northern regions maintained geometric compositions.[23] This evidence suggests that we can speak of at least two regional schools in *Provincia Arabia* and that, despite this, topographical mosaic iconography permeated across them.

Next, before positing evidence for workshop distribution in *Provincia Arabia*, we should contextualise that discussion by suggesting a model for the production of mosaics in *Provincia Arabia*. Accordingly, a model might be found in the case of Gaza. Gaza was an important urban centre during the Byzantine period and might have had one or two mosaic workshops. Alternately, a small rural town like Beth Alpha seems to have only had a small father-and-son business.[24] This scenario may have also occurred in *Provincia Arabia* for urban and rural areas. However, rural areas may have sometimes also been serviced by the larger urban workshops from the nearest

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[21] Ruth and Asher Ovadiah, *Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine Mosaic Pavements in Israel,* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1987), p.182.
[22] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* pp.20-21.
[23] ibid., p.21, p.23.
[24] R. and A. Ovadiah, p.181.

city.[25] A production model can also be proposed by examining mosaics from our assemblage. For example, and in relation to both of the two main issues in this section, it may be the case that the workshop that produced the topographical mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius was also responsible for the Madaba Map. Possibilities such as this indicate that provenance issues reveal a profound closeness between the corpus and the Map, to the extent that they can again be categorised together in this regard.

Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, (ancient Mount Nebo), is very near Madaba and therefore, this element in conjunction with the stylistic similarities between the topographical motif in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius mosaic and the motifs in the Madaba Map might suggest that the same workshop was responsible for both mosaics. Ma,in was also within the territory of Madaba and furthermore, there were stylistic similarities between the topographical mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius and that in the Church on the Acropolis.[26] Although two centuries separate the production of these two mosaics, the same workshop might then have been responsible for all three mosaics: the Saints Lot and Procopius mosaic, the Ma,,in mosaic, and the Madaba Map. If we follow this theory, the workshop responsible may have simply continued to work in similar stylistic traditions over those two centuries. Alternately, different workshops may be responsible for the three mosaics, but these workshops were then all adhering to the artistic traditions of the Madaba „school". Madaba was the episcopal see of the territory, so it is most likely that if one workshop was responsible for all three mosaics, it was situated in the city of Madaba itself.

The stylistic similarities and close dating of the topographical mosaics in the Churches of Saints Peter and Paul and Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa

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[25] Janine Balty, La Place des Mosaiques de Jordanie au sein de la Production Orientale", in *Les Eglises de Jordanie et leurs Mosaïques*, ed. by Duval, pp.153-188, (p.185).
R. and A. Ovadiah, p.182.
[26] Saller and Bagatti, p.109.

suggest that both mosaics were produced by the same workshop.[27] This possibility is the most likely, as the stylistic similarities between these two mosaics are much stronger than in the previous example, as well as the fact that both were found in the same town. This example probably reflects the pattern throughout *Provincia Arabia* in that at least one local workshop (rather than travelling artists/craftsmen) serviced each sizeable town. Moreover, such a workshop may have travelled to smaller, outlying towns as well, rather than these small towns being serviced by travelling artists/craftsmen (although these may have also had a place in the production of mosaics). This scenario is suggested by the evidence reviewed, which offered the possibility that a workshop, probably established in Madaba, was responsible, not just for the Madaba Map, but also two other mosaics in the smaller outlying towns of Ma‚in and Khirbat al-Mukhayyat.

However, the evidence in Umm al-Rasas presents a permutation of this scenario. At least two different teams of mosaicists can be detected in four contemporaneous pavements at Umm al-Rasas, which probably indicates two different mosaic workshops. The team responsible for the programme in the Church of the Lions was particularly skilled at rendering animals and trees in geometric surroundings. Another mosaic team was responsible for the pavements in the Church of the Bishop Sergius, the Church of the Rivers, and the Church of the Priest Wa'il. These mosaics display similar renderings of colour and both groups display topographical iconography.[28] If this theory is correct, it means that both workshops at Umm al-Rasas had architectonic topographical motifs in their repertoire and a similar colour range. Therefore, in the sixth century, there were at least two mosaic workshops servicing Umm al-Rasas. This evidence indicates more than one workshop propagating a specific style, which indicates a „school‟ at work in the churches of Umm al-Rasas. Moreover, the broad stylistic similarities between the church

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[27] Balty, *Mosaiques de Jordanie*, p.155.
[28] Piccirillo, *Activity of the Mosaicists,* p.397.

mosaics of Madaba and the church mosaics in its outlying regions such as Umm al-Rasas and Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, as well as the broad dispersal of topographical iconography throughout *Provincia Arabia*, but particularly in the territory of Madaba, suggests a Madaba „school" of mosaicists. At least one of the workshops of this „school" was located in Madaba itself and at least two were servicing Umm al-Rasas, although not necessarily resident there. Therefore, the evidence reviewed so far, indicates that both the corpus and the Map were equally affected by the workshop distribution and styles of the period. In this sense, we cannot extricate a discussion of chronology from that of provenance.

Lastly, the stylistic evidence, in conjunction with the chronology of the mosaics" appearance, suggests that workshop distribution was not the only important factor in the presence of topographical/cartographical iconography in *Provincia Arabia*. The archaeological evidence in the territory of Madaba suggests that most ecclesiastical building activity occurred during the tenure of Bishop Sergius between 575 and 598.[29] Moreover, at Umm al-Rasas specifically, the following churches were built during his episcopate: the Church of the Priest Waʿil (586), the Church of the Bishop Sergius (587-88), the Church of the Lions (588-89), and the Church of the Rivers (perhaps 593-94). In total, four of the six churches excavated at Umm al-Rasas were built and paved with mosaics in the time of the Bishop Sergius, and out of the six churches excavated at Umm er-Rasas, four contain topographical mosaics.[30] This is a high percentage and suggests that topographical mosaic iconography was particularly popular under Bishop Sergius I. This evidence therefore indicates that bishops had a substantial role in ecclesiastical artistic patronage and suggests that an examination of stylistic elements and motifs may reveal

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[29] ibid., p.391, p.395.
[30] ibid., pp.393-394, p.397. The four mosaics are in the churches of: Saint Stephen, the Priest Waʿil, the Bishop Sergius, and the Lions.

just as much about the bishop‟s patronage, or involvement in local patronage, as about the workshop that produced the mosaic.

This section has demonstrated the connection between chronological and provenance issues. The similarity of style in contemporaneous church mosaics in Madaba and Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, exemplified by the mosaics in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius and the Church of the Map, and at Umm al-Rasas and Gerasa, suggests that each major town was serviced by at least one workshop. These workshops may have also serviced outlying towns, but likewise, these sites may have also been serviced by travelling artists/craftsmen.[31] Therefore, workshops were major participants in the distribution of topographical/cartographical iconography throughout *Provincia Arabia*. In the territory of Madaba, which included Umm al-Rasas and Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, there was more than one workshop propagating similar styles and motifs, and in this sense, we can speak of a Madaba „school‟. Unfortunately, in Gerasa, there are only two extant topographical mosaics, and because they were probably produced by the one workshop, this is not enough evidence on which to attribute a „school‟ to Gerasa. Simultaneously, the styles that predominate under certain bishop‟s tenures suggest the important role of the reigning bishop in the widespread use of topographical/cartographical mosaic iconographies in Byzantine and Umayyad-period *Provincia Arabia*. These issues are unrelated to whether the composition of the mosaic is topographical or cartographical and so the topographical corpus and Madaba Map were able to be categorised together in this section. Therefore, as well as expanding on one of the criteria for discussing the relationship between the corpus and the Map, this section demonstrated an area in which that relationship is very close.

2.3 Transmission of topographical iconography to *Provincia Arabia*

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[31] R. and A. Ovadiah, pp.181-182.

The discussion of provenance so far has now allowed us to deal with the more complex implications of provenance, such as *how* the motifs and compositions that compose topographical/cartographical iconography actually came to *Provincia Arabia*. The next two sections look at the transmission routes and modes of topographical/cartographical iconography to *Provincia Arabia*. It is the first of the above issues that occupies us here. The point of the following two sections is to assess how these provenance issues reflect upon the relationship between the corpus and the Map. The theory investigated is that the topographical concept and some topographical motifs came to *Provincia Arabia* originally from North Africa *via* Syria and Palestine. This theory is supported in this section by the chronology of the iconography's appearance, first in North Africa, then in Syria and Palestine, and finally in *Provincia Arabia*, and by the artistic similarities between the topographical mosaics of these four regions. However, in terms of the scope of this section, we are dealing with a different transmission route for the cartographical compositions of the Saint Stephen mosaic, the Ma,in mosaic, and the Madaba Map. The cartographical sources of these mosaics and their transmission route, from the west to *Provincia Arabia*, were discussed, to the fullest extent possible, in chapter one.[32]

Firstly, let us turn to the appearance of the topographical concept and some topographical motifs in North Africa earlier than in *Provincia Arabia* and how this indicates that these components of the iconography originated in North Africa. It has already been established that the Ammaedara mosaic can be dated to the third-fourth century and the Hippo mosaic to the second-third century.[33] There is also an even earlier mosaic in El Alia (**2.1**), which is datable to the second century and displays architectonic motifs and a nilotic

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[32] Chapter 1.4, pp.36-37.
[33] Chapter 1.2, pp.29-31.

landscape.[34] Furthermore, in Tabarka, there is a mosaic depicting a church and bearing the inscription *Ecclesia Mater/Valentia in Pacae*, that has been dated to the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century **(2.2)**.[35] Therefore, the corpus of North African topographical mosaics are between four and one and a half centuries earlier than the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and up to half a century earlier than most of the topographical mosaics in Syria and Palestine.

It is proposed that the topographical concept and some of its motifs travelled simultaneously from North Africa, by sea to Antioch,[36] *and* overland to Palestine, because the Nile Festival mosaic at Sepphoris, Palestine, bearing a topographical depiction of Alexandria, is datable to the early-fifth century. This dating means that the mosaic may be contemporary with the Tabarka mosaic in North Africa, and therefore, that Palestine was one of the first regions to receive the concept and motifs from North Africa.[37] Contextual evidence of the influence of North African topographical iconography on that of the eastern provinces can also be provided, particularly because these North African influences may have been part of a broader movement. Lavin argued that eastern mosaics in general were descended from those of North Africa because many "new" compositional and design developments in late Antique art appeared first in North African mosaics. These features included lack of a third dimension, isolated landscape features, white background, and centralised composition.[38] It is quite possible that the North African topographical concept and some of its motifs were part of this movement.

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[34] Aïcha Ben Abed, *Tunisian Mosaics: Treasures from Roman Africa,* trans. by Sharon Grevet, (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, Getty Publications, 2006), p.36.

[35] Assimakopolou-Atzaka, p.2.

[36] See Arnold H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire: a social, economic and administrative survey 284-602,* 4 vols, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964; repr. 1973 in 2 vols), II, 857.

[37] Leah Di Segni, „Response to G.W. Bowersock: The mosaic inscription in the Nile Festival Building at Sepphoris", *JRA*, 18 (2005), 781-784, (p.784).

[38] Irving Lavin, „The Hunting Mosaics of Antioch and Their Sources: A Study of Compositional Principles in the Development of Early Mediaeval Style", *DOP*, 17 (1963), 179-286, (p.268).

It was established in chapter one that there are clear artistic connections between the topographical iconography in the late-Roman mosaics of North Africa and the topographical corpus of *Provincia Arabia* and Madaba Map. That analysis must now be applied to proving that the transmission route proposed in this section is accurate. As such, the architectonic motifs in the Ammaedara mosaic resemble a more detailed rendering of the two-towers-flanking-a-gate motif in the Madaba Map. Likewise, the villa motif in the *dominus Julius* mosaic from Carthage is also that of the towers flanking a gate, although, the style of execution is again different from that in the Madaba Map. In general, there is a broad stylistic similarity even between some of the two-towers-flanking-a-gate motifs and the prototype of the walled-city motif best seen in *Provincia Arabia* in the Gerasa mosaics. Particularly in the case of the *dominus Julius* mosaic, it appears that if the perspective of the villa motif in this mosaic were altered to make it partially bird‟s-eye and partially frontal, it would actually *be* a walled-city motif. Therefore, the chronological, contextual, and artistic evidence suggests that we are correct to attribute the origins of the topographical concept and some of its motifs to North African topographical mosaics.

Next, the evidence for whether the iconography was transmitted to *Provincia Arabia* from Syria or Palestine should be reviewed. The purpose of this investigation is to expand on an area in which the corpus and the Map can be categorised together. We look first at the mosaics from Syria and their connections with the assemblage. Firstly, the chronology of Syrian topographical mosaics suggests that topographical iconography came to *Provincia Arabia* from Syria. For example, the mosaic of *Megalopsychia* in Yakto, Syria (**2.3**), dated to shortly after the middle of the fifth century,

Andrea Carandini, „La Villa di Piazza Armerina, La circulazione della cultura figurativa africana nel tardo impero ed altre precisazioni‟, *Dialoghi di archeologia,* 1, 1 (1967), 93-120, (p.111).

contains topographical iconography and therefore preceded the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia*, which appeared between the sixth and eighth centuries.[39] Moreover, there are the topographical mosaics in the Church of the Holy Martyrs at Tayyibat al-Imam, Syria, which are dated to shortly before the middle of the fifth century.[40] The architectonic topographical subject matter in the Cathedral of Homs is also around one hundred years earlier than the earliest extant topographical mosaics in *Provincia Arabia*, datable to around the fifth century as well.[41]

The style of architectonic topographical motifs in Syrian mosaics that are datable to before the appearance of topographical mosaics in *Provincia Arabia*, also suggests that the iconography moved to *Provincia Arabia* from Syria. Firstly, there is a labelled, topographical architectonic depiction of Alexandria in a mosaic from Antioch that is comparable to the *Laberii* Villa mosaic at *Uthina* (Oudna) in North Africa, and that Campbell interprets as datable to between AD 160-80 and 220 on the basis of this similarity **(2.4)**.[42] The depiction is a frontal view of a villa or city, rendered similarly to the two-towers-flanking-a-gate motif that represents the villa in the mosaic of *dominus Julius*. This evidence might indicate that the Antiochene mosaicists responsible for this mosaic received artistic inspiration from North Africa as early as the second and third centuries. However, there is no archaeological material accompanying this Antiochene mosaic that could confirm the second-third century date posited by Campbell. Moreover, the evidence reviewed thus far on the topographical mosaics from North Africa, Syria, Palestine, and *Provincia Arabia* suggests that two topographical mosaics can

[39] Doro Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements,* 2 vols, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), I, 279.

[40] Abdul-Razzaq Zaqzuq and Michele Piccirillo, „Tayibat al-Imam – Hamah in central Syria", *LA,* 49 (1999), 443-464, (p.450).

[41] Nessib Saliby and Marc Griesheimer, „Un Martyrium octagonal decouvert a Homs (Syrie) en 1988 et sa mosaique", *AnTard*, 7 (1999), 383-400, (p.383).

Zaqzuq and Piccirillo, p.456.

[42]Sheila Campbell, *The Mosaics of Antioch,* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988), pp.39-40.

be stylistically similar and datable to different centuries. Therefore, it is suggested that the Antiochene mosaic depicting Alexandria is datable instead to the fifth century, aligning it with the majority of the Syrian topographical corpus.

Moreover, there are Syrian mosaics from the fifth century that bear the walled-city motif a century or so before its appearance in *Provincia Arabia*. There is the mosaic in the Church of the Holy Martyrs at Tayyibat al-Imam, which bears walled-city motifs that are stylistically comparable to those found in the earliest Arabian topographical mosaics at Gerasa. It should be noted at this point that the transmission of the walled-city motif was not mentioned in relation to late Roman North Africa, even though it is a staple motif of both topographical and cartographical iconographies. This is because, as discussed in chapter one, it appears to have been transmitted to the mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* by Syro-Palestinian and Alexandrian manuscript illumination instead of by North African topographical mosaic iconography.[43]

The evidence reviewed suggests that topographical iconography was transmitted to *Provincia Arabia* from Syria. However, there is also chronological and stylistic evidence that suggests that topographical iconography was transmitted to *Provincia Arabia* from Palestine. The possibly fifth-century mosaic in the Church of the Multiplication at Tabgha, Galilee **(2.5)** depicts a nilotic scene and the topographical elements popular in Arabian church mosaics between the sixth to eighth centuries. The two transepts of the church contain large panels of nilotic scenes containing birds, aquatic plants, a Nilometer, and other buildings, all scattered against a plain ground.[44] Schneider initially suggested that the mosaic was executed in the

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[43] Chapter 1.2, pp.25-26.
[44] R. and A. Ovadiah, p.174.

fourth century,[45] but later revised the date to the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century.[46] The church mosaic in Tabarka is also datable to the fifth century, as is the Nile Festival mosaic at Sepphoris, which suggests that a fifth-century dating for the Tabgha church is contextually acceptable.

There are also stylistic similarities between these Palestinian topographical motifs, which are often stylistic adaptations of the walled-city motif, and those in the topographical corpus of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map. For example, the walled-city motif in the Haditha pavement (**2.6**) is of the same shape and form as the walled-city motifs in the Gerasa mosaics; they are only rendered differently. These motif connections also suggest that the topographical concept and some motifs came to *Provincia Arabia* from Palestine, rather than Syria. However, given the strength of the evidence that points to both Syria *and* Palestine, it seems prudent to suggest that the mosaicists and patrons of topographical mosaics in *Provincia Arabia* were simultaneously influenced by the iconography directly from both regions.

This discussion brings us to the issue of the actual transmission route taken by the topographical concept and motifs that compose both topographical and cartographical iconography. Beginning with the point of origin, artists/craftsmen and/or their pattern books, or other transmission modes, probably travelled between North African cities such as Tabarka and Alexandria, and then travelled from that city by sea[47] and/or coastal route[48] to Antioch, as well as overland to Palestine (**map 2**). The two media of evidence that suggests that the transmission route proposed here is accurate are mosaic

[45] Alfons M. Schneider, *The Church of the Multiplying of the Loaves and Fishes at Tabgha on the Lake of Gennasaret and its Mosaics,* ed. by Archibald A. Gordon, trans. by and rev. by E. Graf, 2nd edn (London: A. Ouseley, 1937), p.77.
[46] Dunbabin, *Mosaics of Roman North Africa,* p.230.
[47] Jones, II, 857.
[48] Anthea Harris, *Byzantium, Britain and the West: the Archaeology of Cultural Identity AD 400-650,* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), p.69.

and manuscript illumination. Biebel's theory that the Hellenistic walled-city motif first entered the eastern artistic repertoire in Alexandria[49] could suggest that part of the transmission route operated between the cities of Alexandria and Antioch. If we follow this theory, it can also be proposed that trade routes operated between Alexandria and the cities of North Africa, allowing topographical iconography to travel between Hippo, Carthage, Tabarka (three locations which contain topographical mosaics) and Alexandria.

If Biebel's theory of the walled-city motif entering the eastern repertoire in Alexandria is accurate, then the motif may have travelled directly from Alexandria to Antioch in the fifth century. As indicated in chapter one, there is, however, not enough evidence to conclude that the walled-city motif first entered the east in Alexandria.[50] Nevertheless, Alexandria was an Imperial centre,[51] as well as being the provenance of manuscript illumination bearing the walled-city motif, and this makes it a candidate for the iconography's point of exit to both Syria and Palestine, where it was utilised in both manuscript illumination and mosaic. However, as discussed in chapter one, the mosaic evidence of the walled-city motif in Syria and Palestine is earlier than the manuscript illumination evidence of either Alexandria or Syria-Palestine.

Nevertheless, North African topographical iconography *in general* is earlier than that from Syria and Palestine. Therefore, it seems acceptable that the topographical concept and some motifs would have left North Africa *via* a well-connected city such as Alexandria. The other possibility is that the early preponderance of the topographical concept and some of its motifs in North Africa might suggest that the walled-city motif, as one of those motifs, first entered the eastern artistic repertoire in a centre nearer North Africa, such as

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[49] Biebel, pp.346-347.
[50] Chapter 1.2, pp.25-26.
[51] Basema Hamarneh, „The River Nile and Egypt in the Mosaics of the Middle East" in *Madaba Map Centenary,* ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.185-189, (p.188).

Alexandria. This possibility seems particularly attractive given the stylistic similarity between some of the North African two-towers-flanking-a-gate motifs, (such as the villa motif in the mosaic of *dominus Julius*), and the walled-city motif, as well as the emergence of nilotic/topographical scenes (as part of topographical iconography) in North Africa before Syria or Palestine. Therefore, if we view the iconography as a whole and the walled-city motif as a component of that iconography, it seems fair to posit Alexandria as the point of exit to Antioch and Palestine for both the walled-city motif and topographical iconography in general.

On arriving in Antioch, the motifs probably travelled overland from there to other cities of Syria with topographical mosaics, such as Yakto, Homs, Tayyibat al-Imam, and finally, to *Provincia Arabia*. Simultaneously, the topographical motifs from Palestine also probably travelled overland into *Provincia Arabia*. The extension of the route from Antioch to *Provincia Arabia* is supported by the fact that most glass excavated in Gerasa was of Syrian fabric, datable to the fourth or fifth century.[52] This fact supports the theory of a trade route from Syria to Gerasa, which might have also been used for artistic transmission.

The ancient roads of the region also explain how artists and iconographies were transmitted around the region and how well-connected the cities and towns were that bear evidence of topographical mosaics or topographical manuscript illumination. There was an entire network of Roman roads linking the Roman East from Syria to Egypt in order to serve local requirements. This road network reached its apex before our period, in the Severan age.[53] In connection with the theories discussed here, there was a road connecting

[52] Paul V.C. Baur, „Glassware", in *Gerasa*, ed. by Kraeling, pp.505-546, (p.513, p.514, p.518).
[53] *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World: Map by Map Directory,* ed. by Richard J.A. Talbert in collaboration with Roger S. Bagnall et al, 2 vols*,* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), II, 1057.

Alexandria and the location of the early fifth-century topographical mosaic at Sepphoris, supporting an overland transmission route from North Africa to Palestine. Within *Provincia Arabia*, the *Via Nova Traiana* connected Gerasa, Bostra, Madaba, and Philadelphia, and a minor road linked Madaba to Umm al-Rasas. These roads facilitated the movement of topographical/cartographical iconography both into and around *Provincia Arabia*.[54]

The chronology, similarity of motif range and style, and ancient road networks support that the topographical concept and motifs of topographical/cartographical iconography travelled between North Africa and Alexandria, then to Syria and Palestine, and finally to *Provincia Arabia*. The road networks support that there was strong and well-established communication between the regions. The stylistic qualities of Arabian topographical motifs suggest that the mosaicists of the province had contact with the motifs that had come directly from *both* Syria *and* Palestine, rather than just one region or the other. This section has demonstrated another area in which the topographical corpus and Madaba Map can be categorised together, because all of the mosaics in our assemblage share the same transmission origins and provenance in regard to the topographical concept and motifs. However, as was noted at the beginning of this section, the cartographical compositional sources of the Ma„in mosaic, Saint Stephen mosaic, and the Madaba Map continue to have a distant relationship with the compositional sources of the rest of the assemblage. Nevertheless, these three mosaics are related to the rest of the assemblage insofar as the topographical concept and the topographical motifs they contain.

2.4 The evidence for pattern books in *Provincia Arabia*

[54]*Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World,* ed. by Richard J.A. Talbert in collaboration with Roger S. Bagnall et al, (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), Maps 67, 69-71, 74.

This section supplements our understanding of the provenance of the motifs in the corpus and the Map, as discussed in the previous section. We now look at the evidence that the pattern book was the most likely or sole transmission mode for topographical iconography, specifically into *Provincia Arabia*. The focus is on the pattern book, as this mode is the most popular motif transmission theory, especially amongst scholars such as Piccirillo, Avi-Yonah, Dauphin, and Asher Ovadiah. We begin with an assessment of some of the common criticisms of the pattern book theory and an analysis of how these points suggest that other transmission modes operated in *Provincia Arabia* with reference to the production of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. The methodology also involves an assessment of whether the mosaics discussed display minutely-detailed similarities in common with each other. It is only the presence of this level of detail that requires a transmission mode such as the pattern book.[55] The conclusions of this chapter bear upon the relationship between the corpus and the Map, as we shall see whether these mosaics are affected by similar transmission modes.

We begin with a review of the criticisms and support for the pattern book theory in order to contextualise the specific evidence regarding *Provincia Arabia*. The popularity of the pattern book theory in archaeological literature means that we should start with looking at the arguments against it. Bruneau pointed out that there are often significant differences between mosaics displaying the same theme or scene and he used these discrepancies to disprove that pattern books were the major mode of artistic transmission in Antiquity. Bruneau did not deny that models for mosaic decorations existed, but suggested that the first stage where mosaicists traced their designs on the floor was preceded by a paperboard instead of a pattern book. A pattern book suggested to him something far more extensive, such as detailed collections

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[55] Extrapolated from: Philippe Bruneau, „Les Mosaistes Antiques avaient-ils des Cahiers de Modeles‟, *RAr,* 2 (1984), 241-272, (pp.245-246).

used and distributed through professional channels.[56] Hunt agreed with Bruneau‟s repudiation of the pattern book theory, due to the lack of evidence for them, positing instead the use of cartoons and an overlap between the roles of painters and mosaicists. She suggested that the main mode of motif transmission was the mosaicists themselves, rather than the copying and movement of pattern books.[57] Conversely, Avi-Yonah suggested that the pattern book theory is not destroyed by the incidence of slight variations between mosaics utilising the same patterns,[58] and Dauphin suggested the extensive use of pattern books, containing pages with scenes and motifs in the manner of wallpaper samples, and some observation drawings from daily life.[59] Ultimately however, it is only cases of two or more mosaics separated by time and space, but which bear similarity of *minute* details that suggest the pattern-book was the most likely transmission mode.

Balmelle and Darmon made a proposal that is particularly important for Arabian topographical mosaics, given that the *Vienna Genesis* bears a very similar form of walled-city motif to that found in the topographical mosaics of Gerasa. They proposed that manuscript illuminations and the mosaics seen in person by artists/craftsmen were more likely transmission modes than pattern books.[60] This proposal can be applied to the compositions of the Ma‚in mosaic, the Saint Stephen mosaic, and the Madaba Map. These compositions were based on Roman visual itineraries in concept, rather than in details, which again dispels the necessity of the pattern book and suggests that the compositions were carried to *Provincia Arabia* by the artists/craftsmen and patrons themselves. Manuscript illuminations and

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[56] ibid., p.242, p.249, pp.258-260.

[57] L. Hunt, p.24.

[58] Michael Avi-Yonah, „Mosaic Pavements in Palestine‟, *QDAP*, 3, 1 (1933), 136-181, (p.136).

[59] Claudine Dauphin, „Byzantine Pattern Books: A Re-examination of the Problem in the light of the Inhabited Scroll‟, *Art History*, 1 (1978), 400-423, (p.404, p.408).

[60] Catherine Balmelle and Jean-Pierre Darmon, „L‟artisan-mosaiste dans l‟Antiquite Tardive‟, in *Artistes, Artisans et Production Artistique au Moyen Age,* ed. by Xavier Barral i Altet, 3 vols, (Paris: Picard, 1986), I: Les Hommes, pp.235-253, (pp.246-248).

prototypes seen and made note of by mosaicists and patrons could have also been the transmission modes to *Provincia Arabia* for the cartographical compositions discussed in chapter one. This proposal is made because the *Notitia Dignitatum* was already in manuscript form, which might diminish the need for the pattern book theory in this case. Moreover, artefacts like the *Peutinger Table* might have been seen by patrons or artists/craftsmen and used as a prototype for the production of the Madaba Map. Ultimately then, it is probable that the compositions based on cartographical traditions were transmitted to *Provincia Arabia* from the west in manuscript illuminations, and/or in the memories of the artists/craftsmen and/or patrons themselves. There is no uniform appearance or details of the cartographically-sourced compositions in *Provincia Arabia*, so the pattern book as a transmission mode is unnecessary.

We should now apply this overview of the different transmission modes to the artistic situation in Byzantine-Umayyad-period *Provincia Arabia*. We shall see that the pattern book theory is not necessary in terms of the movement of topographical motifs *within* Provincia Arabia, but was probably one of the modes of transmission for motifs *into* the region. There is evidence that the pattern book was not the only transmission mode for motifs from other regions into *Provincia Arabia*. As such, the appearance of topographical iconography in the borders of mosaics in Byzantine-Umayyad-period *Provincia Arabia* and Syria does not necessitate the pattern book theory. For example, in the Church on the Acropolis, the topographical theme is composed as a border surrounding a central motif. This composition is only seen elsewhere in the mosaic of *Megalopsychia* from Yakto near Antioch, the Daniel textile now in the Berlin Museum, and the Saint Stephen mosaic. The textile is decorated with a central motif, surrounded by a border bearing

churches and martyrias separated by stylised trees.[61] Therefore, this textile has the same composition as the mosaics at Ma,in and the Church of Saint Stephen.[62] The Ma,in mosaic, Saint Stephen mosaic, *Megalopsychia* mosaic, and Berlin textile share the same rare composition, but each rendering is stylistically different. This fact suggests that a pattern book was not required, as the concept of this composition could be easily viewed and memorised. However, the basically geographically-accurate composition of the Ma,in and Saint Stephen topographical borders suggests that the visual itinerary tradition was also one of the sources for the compositions of these mosaics, as discussed in chapter one, and that the patrons and/or artists/craftsmen combined these sources in the production of the mosaics.

Simultaneously, there are also clear indications of the dispersal of pattern books between *Provincia Arabia* and other provinces. However, this evidence does not extend to topographical and cartographical iconography, but is reflected, rather, in the transmission of other motifs. Nevertheless, we can extrapolate from these examples that pattern books were probably involved in the transmission of topographical motifs as well. One such indication of the existence and use of inter-provincial pattern books is the stylistic similarities between the sixth-century Qasr el-Lebia pavement in Cyrenaica and the pavement in the Church of Mary, Elias and Soreg at Gerasa. Mary"s dress is similar to that worn by *Ktisis* in Qasr el-Lebia, and Soreg holds an olive branch in her right hand, just as *Ktisis* holds a palm branch and wreath. In addition, the pose of Theodore swinging a censer on the mosaic pavement of the Church of Saints Cosmas and Damianus at Gerasa is similar to the pose of *Kosmesis* at Qasr el-Lebia. Moreover, in the pavement of the Church of the Priest John at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, there are full-length figures carrying baskets of food similar to the one carried by *Ananeosis* in the Qasr el-Lebia

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[61] Josef Strzygowski, *Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Spätantiken und Frühchristlichen Kunst,* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1901), pp.91-98.
[62] de Vaux, pp.241-242.

pavement.[63] The above examples present detailed stylistic and motif commonalities between North Africa and *Provincia Arabia*. These similarities suggest the existence of pattern books that travelled between the two regions in the sixth century and also support the transmission route proposed in the last section. In addition, it is possible that if pattern books were travelling between North Africa and *Provincia Arabia*, that they also contained some topographical themes and motifs, even if the extant evidence is silent on this point.

Within *Provincia Arabia*, there is evidence against the major use of pattern books in the production of topographical and cartographical mosaic iconography. Although topographical iconography and variations on the walled-city motif appear throughout *Provincia Arabia*, the minute stylistic details of these motifs show significant variation. This variation suggests that the topographical mosaic theme and motifs circulated throughout *Provincia Arabia* without the aid of pattern books, perhaps even as simply as through the travels and memories of artists/craftsmen. This assessment applies to both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. In general, the topographical mosaic motifs in *Provincia Arabia* that show the most stylistic similarity with each other are found within a close proximity that seems to suggest the work of the one mosaic workshop, or at least, that patrons and artists/craftsmen were able to conveniently, and perhaps even regularly, view the work first-hand. For example, as discussed earlier, there are detailed similarities between the topographical mosaics in the Churches of Saint John the Baptist and Saints Peter and Paul at Gerasa, and there are also stylistic similarities between topographical mosaics found in the diocese of Madaba, such as the Ma,in mosaic, the Saints Lot and Procopius mosaic, and the Madaba Map.

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[63] Elisabeth Alföldi-Rosenbaum and John Ward-Perkins, *Justinianic Mosaic Pavements in Cyrenaican Churches*, Monografie di archeologia libica 14, (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1980), p.36, p.47.

A more ambiguous example in regard to the question of pattern books is provided by the stylistic similarity of the topographical motifs in the Benaki mosaic (**2.7**) to the motif in the Saints Lot and Procopius mosaic. The detailed similarity of these two mosaics might suggest that they were created by the same workshop in the sixth-century diocese of Madaba, although, the provenance and precise date of the Benaki museum mosaic is unknown. Both of these mosaics even contain depictions of the same type of triangular pattern on top of their fortifications. However, another possibility, given the unknown provenance and date of the Benaki mosaic, is that both of these mosaics were based on the same prototype, rather than produced by the same workshop. It is likely that this prototype was based on the Hellenistic walled-city motif.[64] The prototype might have come to the mosaicists of these two mosaics in a pattern book, especially as the pattern book was the transmission mode most conducive to preserving minute stylistic and motif detail. Therefore, in the case of these two mosaics, the minute level of shared detail suggests that, if the same workshop was not responsible for them, or they were not produced at least within a close proximity to each other in *Provincia Arabia*, the motif was probably transmitted to the mosaicists of the two mosaics in a pattern book. However, the contextual evidence of Arabian mosaics discussed earlier, suggested that two or more topographical/cartographical mosaics bearing detailed motif similarities were generally located in close proximity to each other, or produced by the same workshop. This context suggests that the two mosaics discussed here *were* either produced by the same workshop or produced by different workshops in such close proximity to each other in *Provincia Arabia*, that they were able to view each other"s work first-hand, and thus, in all likelihood, negating the need for the use of a pattern book in this scenario.

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[64] Assimakopolou-Atzaka, p.8.

It seems that the mode of transmission into *Provincia Arabia* was often, but not only, the pattern book, due to the minute detail as well as broad pictorial concepts that were transmitted to *Provincia Arabia*. In the case of the *Megalopsychia* mosaic, the concept of this composition, in combination with the itinerary traditions discussed in chapter one, probably became known to the artists/craftsmen and/or patrons of the Ma„in and Saint Stephen mosaics through first-hand viewing, rather than a pattern book, as the similarities between these mosaics are not precise. In terms of transmission modes within *Provincia Arabia*, the close proximity of many Arabian mosaics bearing close stylistic and motif similarities, means that the pattern book is not the only answer. Such evidence more strongly suggests the work of the same workshop or different workshops in a close enough proximity to one another to view each other‟s work conveniently and regularly. On the whole, in the case of both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, it is unnecessary to postulate the pattern book theory within *Provincia Arabia*. The evidence also fits the conclusions drawn in the last section about the transmission route from North Africa, Syria, and Palestine to *Provincia Arabia*. Ultimately, the corpus and the Map can be categorised together in the discussion of the role of pattern books and other *motif* transmission modes into and within *Provincia Arabia*. It is only in terms of *compositional* transmission modes that the Saint Stephen mosaic, Ma„in mosaic, and Madaba Map need to be set aside from the rest of the assemblage.

2.5 Artistic character: Byzantine or provincial?
The provenance issues reviewed in this chapter allow us to now draw some conclusions about the artistic character of the iconography in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. This is a complex issue because the motifs and concepts that compose the assemblage originally came from other regions. This discussion attempts to interpret however, whether the *finished product* was Byzantine or Arabian in style and intent. There are major compositional differences between the corpus and the Madaba Map;

however, for the purposes of a discussion centred on artistic character, these mosaics are most usefully discussed together, because the focus is on the motifs and concepts, rather than the compositions of the mosaics. The methodology of this section involves an examination of the artistic evidence for and against the style and intent of the corpus and the Map being Arabian. This method involves analysis of the towns depicted in these mosaics, the specific development of the walled-city motif in *Provincia Arabia*, and the particular intent of the topographical motifs in Arabian mosaics. This method is followed by an investigation of what a Byzantine mosaic actually is and a subsequent assessment of whether the assemblage can then be called Byzantine in terms of its artistic character.

Firstly, let us look at the evidence that the corpus and the Madaba Map were unoriginal works derived from the motifs of Antiquity, and in this sense, neither Byzantine nor Arabian in artistic character. We start here because of the prevalence of this view in scholarship on the mosaics of modern Jordan.[65] Balty suggested that Arabian workshops did not display originality except in their choice of motifs from the Hellenistic-Roman cycle.[66] Moreover, Piccirillo suggested that the sixth-century appearance of Classical motifs in the church pavements of *Provincia Arabia* was due to the workshops of the region acquiring pattern books filled with Classical themes. Amongst these „Classical themes" was the walled-city motif. Such a „Classicising" pattern book must have come from the cultural centres of the Byzantine Empire according to him, which would include Constantinople.[67] Therefore, Piccirillo"s theory was similar to Balty"s, in that the motifs were acknowledged as derived from the Classical period, but here, it was proposed that they were collated in the centres of the late Antique world, ready to be transported to the provinces. The context of this theory is the Justinianic-

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[65] Balty, *Mosaiques de Jordanie*, p.186.
Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan,* p.34, pp.38-41.
[66] Balty, *Mosaiques de Jordanie*, p.186.
[67] Piccirillo, *Art of Jordan*, pp.129-130.

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period „Classicising movement" and it was probably this movement, if we agree that it occurred, that urged Arabian patrons and artists/craftsmen to develop their own topographical and cartographical iconography. The movement would have been generated by a centre of the Empire, and probably even the capital itself, Constantinople.[68] If we follow this possibility, the role of the Byzantine capital in our iconographies was only that it provided the impetus for them, rather than their details. Furthermore, the role of Constantinople and other Byzantine centres would have been as the transmission vehicle of these Hellenistic-Roman motifs and concepts to *Provincia Arabia*, rather than an artistic influence in itself.

Balty"s point is true in the sense that Arabian mosaics almost universally display motifs from the Hellenistic-Roman cycle. However, her conclusion about the mosaics" subsequent unoriginality can be proved untrue. By the seventh century, we see that in the mosaic in the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra, the town motif has become schematic, angular, and simplified. This style is characteristically Arabian and is also seen, in a more detailed form, in the eighth-century mosaics of the Church of Saint Stephen. Although an Arabian style developed, the walled-city motif itself is certainly not native. It was originally part of the Hellenistic and Roman motif index, and was later used in fifth-century Syrian and Palestinian churches and secular contexts, and in sixth-century Alexandrian and Syro-Palestinian Bible manuscript illumination.[69] Compositionally and stylistically, mosaics such as in the Church of Saint Stephen and the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa can be related to these above examples respectively, which impinges on how we assess the provenance of their artistic character.

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[68] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, pp.22-23.
Piccirillo, *Activity of the Mosaicists*, p.397.
[69] Chapter 1.2, Chapter 2.3.

The argument that the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map display Arabian character can be extended by demonstrating that the choice of towns depicted in these mosaics was specific to the concerns and interests in that province. The selection of towns was entirely provincial and influenced by the personal knowledge of the artist/craftsman and patron. As such, there is often overlap between the cities depicted in the different mosaic pavements of *Provincia Arabia*. The towns of Askalon, Gaza, Esbounta, Belemounta, Areopolis, (Charach M)ouba, and possibly Eleutheropolis are depicted in the topographical mosaic at Ma„in and in the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen. In addition, each city found in the topographical section of the Saint Stephen mosaic is also found in the Madaba Map, except for one.[70]

The symbolism of the topographical scenes in these Arabian churches also reflects a characteristically local meaning. Many of these topographical scenes, such as in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius, are meant to depict the town or church itself and thus serve as a prayer to God that the prosperity of the town, the church, and its congregation continue. Most of these topographical scenes are also found in the context of pastoral and vintage scenes that show the occupations of the locals. In this context, we should bear in mind that the sixth to eighth century was a time of economic prosperity in *Provincia Arabia* and the three *Palaestinae*, even despite the impact of the permanent Islamic invasions of the region in the seventh century.[71] Therefore, in regard to this aspect of the mosaics, the assemblage shares an intent firmly tied to the province in which they were produced. So far, the Arabian artistic

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[70] Piccirillo and Attiyat, p.348.
Michele Piccirillo, „I mosaici del complesso di Santo Stefano‟ in *Gli Scavi del Complesso di Santo Stefano*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.121-164, (p.157).
Noël Duval, „Le rappresentazioni architettoniche‟ in *Gli Scavi del Complesso di Santo Stefano*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.165-207, (pp.167-193).
[71] Gatier, p.290.
Sidney Smith, „Events in Arabia in the 6th Century A. D.‟, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 16, 3 (1954), 425-468, (p.429).
S. Thomas Parker, „An Empire's New Holy Land: The Byzantine Period‟, *NEA*, 62, 3 (1999), 134-180, (p.136).
Holum, p.96, p.99.

character of our assemblage has been supported by a number of points: the concepts behind the mosaics, the choices of towns depicted, and the specifically Arabian development of the walled-city motif, which is central to these topographical/cartographical mosaics, and which is a development that actually does not involve Constantinople.

We should test the possibility that our assemblage displays Byzantine artistic character. Therefore, we should look at a „Byzantine" mosaic containing subject matter comparable to that in our assemblage in order to gather the criteria for what a Byzantine mosaic actually is. Unfortunately though, the most extensive and one of the only "Byzantine" and "secular"-themed floor mosaics found to date in Constantinople was uncovered in an Imperial context, the mosaic in the Peristyle of the Great Palace (**2.8**).[72] This makes our task difficult, because if provincial and local items were at one end of the art spectrum, then the Imperial was at the other end. Therefore, our assemblage is composed of local products, placed into an ecclesiastical context, and in contrast, this Constantinopolitan mosaic was commissioned for an Imperial context. We need to bear this disparity in mind in the following analysis. The debates over the dating of this mosaic continue, but it is mainly considered to be Justinianic period or possibly later.[73] So, what of the artistic character of this „Byzantine" mosaic? And we should at least *start* with the assumption that this pavement is Byzantine because it was found in Constantinople. Firstly, a fifth-century mosaic from Apamea in Syria bears design and compositional similarities to the Great Palace mosaic. Lavin therefore proposed that these elements of the Great Palace mosaic were originally Syrian rather than Constantinopolitan,[74] considering that the Syrian

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[72] James Trilling, „The Soul of the Empire: Style and Meaning in the Mosaic Pavement of the Byzantine Imperial Palace in Constantinople", *DOP,* 43 (1989), 27-72, (pp.27-28).
[73] Dunbabin, *Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, p.227.
Gerard Brett, „The Mosaic of the Great Palace in Constantinople", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* 5 (1942), 34-43, (p.43).
Trilling, p.30.
[74] Lavin, p.270.

example precedes the Great Palace mosaic. This issue introduces part of the problem with the label of Byzantine or Imperial art, as these labels in themselves are a combination of numerous regional influences. The Great Palace mosaic also bears artistic similarities to North African late Roman-period mosaics. However, while the North African mosaics depict rural scenes in well-structured compositions, the Great Palace mosaic depicts them in a loosely-structured composition.[75] These artistic elements suggest that at least this Imperial and Byzantine mosaic was greatly influenced by the mosaic art of the provinces even if the *finished product* was what would have been considered „Byzantine" by both the Imperial patron and artist/craftsman.

In terms of a Byzantine artistic framework, our assemblage also roughly fits in with some broad Empire-wide mosaic trends.[76] And when a trend is Empire-wide, it is likely that the trends were generated by a central source, which was probably the Imperial capital. For example, in the fourth and fifth centuries in the Byzantine Empire, most mosaic pavements were geometric and this developed into the plant and animal motifs that appeared on pavements in the later-fifth and sixth centuries.[77] These trends can be seen in the pavements of *Provincia Arabia*, but they still do not specifically account for the appearance of topographical/cartographical iconography. But let us go back to the question of what is meant exactly by a „Byzantine" mosaic. In this thesis, it is not considered that the art that originated during the Byzantine period in the Byzantine provinces was necessarily „Byzantine" in artistic character. This art is often provincial. But essentially, this term „Byzantine art" must mean the art created in and/or influenced by Constantinople.[78]

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[75] Brett, p.37.
[76] Henry Maguire, *Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial World in Early Byzantine Art,* Monographs on the fine arts, 43 (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press for College Art Association of America, 1987), p.5.
[77] ibid., p.6.
Henry Maguire, „Christians, Pagans and the Representation of Nature", in *Rhetoric, Nature and Magic in Byzantine Art,* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp.131-160, (p.143).
[78] L. Hunt, p.4.

At this point, we must acknowledge that much early-Byzantine art itself takes a great deal of influence from the Hellenistic and Roman motif index, especially as Constantinople saw itself as the successor to Rome and its Empire. However, Byzantine art in numerous media imposed its own unique and innovative forms on these Classical traditions from the fourth century onwards; it is just improbable that this phenomenon occurred in regard to our mosaic assemblage. If anything, the evidence suggests that it was the art of the provinces – Syria, Palestine, North Africa, and *Provincia Arabia* that imposed their *own* artistic character afresh onto the Hellenistic and Roman topographical motifs and compositions. Conversely, Hunt interpreted that the mosaics of our assemblage could be connected with the true "Byzantine art", which by its nature came from and was influenced by Constantinople. She assessed that these mosaics fit into the wider context of Byzantine art, but that they were a "regional manifestation of the art of their time". This interpretation seems rather vague. However, her point was that the mosaics depict the daily lives, occupations, and hobbies specific to the people of the province or the particular town, not to Constantinople.[79]

Ultimately, the topographical/cartographical mosaic iconography of *Provincia Arabia* is compositionally related to, amongst others, the tradition of Roman visual itineraries such as the *Peutinger Table* and the Dura Europos shield, and Syrian mosaic compositions, such as the *Megalopsychia* mosaic at Yakto, which was later found in the compositions of the Maʿīn and Saint Stephen mosaics. In terms of the motifs, they were originally Hellenistic and Roman, but the walled-city motif as it first appeared in *Provincia Arabia* seems to have been particularly influenced by the walled-city motifs in the Alexandrian and Syro-Palestinian manuscript illuminations of the sixth

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[79] ibid., p.4.

century.[80] Therefore, it is difficult to see where Hunt proposes that the art of Constantinople comes into the artistic character of Arabian mosaics such as those in our assemblage.

The iconographies in our assemblage were attributable originally to the Hellenistic-Roman motif index, including the walled-city motif. However, the walled-city motif and the concept of topographical iconography was first found in the eastern provinces in Byzantine-period Syria and Palestine, before it developed into a specifically Arabian style between the sixth and eighth centuries. Therefore, it was the provincial art of North Africa, Syria, Palestine, and lastly, *Provincia Arabia* that imposed its own styles and intents onto these motifs from the Hellenistic-Roman cycle, not Constantinople. Furthermore, the composition into which these themes were placed, with the inclusion of topography in occupational and earth-related contexts – are characteristically Byzantine-Umayyad period Arabian. The significance that these topographical mosaics assumed also – as the focus of prayers to God for the continued prosperity of the town – is characteristic of *Provincia Arabia*. Ultimately, these mosaics display artistic influence from other times and places, but in their entirety, are unique products of *Provincia Arabia* in intent and style.

Conclusions

This chapter demonstrated, in contrast to the issues raised in chapter one, the great extent to which the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together. This closeness of relationship however, is largely due to the nature of the issues discussed. In terms of dating and provenance, the corpus is affected similarly to the Map, and the fact that the corpus displays topographical iconography and the Map contains cartographical iconography does not bear upon issues such as dating methods, the geographical

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[80] Chapter 1.2, 1.4, 2.3.

distribution of the assemblage, and workshop distribution. Moreover, two of the criteria for the discussion of a relationship between the corpus and the Madaba Map in the first place were their chronological and geographical proximity to each other. Therefore, the corpus and the Map were categorised together in terms of dating parameters and geographical distribution. Furthermore, the corpus and the Map were subject to the same workshop distribution and mosaic „school" trends. These trends were also dependent on region. It is therefore possible that the mosaic workshop responsible for mosaics of the corpus also produced the Madaba Map.

Alternately, it is possible that the mosaics of the corpus situated in the diocese of Madaba and the Madaba Map were all products of the Madaba „school", and not necessarily of the same workshop. This conclusion suggests that the division here is not between the corpus and the Map, but between mosaics of the assemblage from the diocese of Madaba and mosaics not from that diocese. As well as expanding on the chronological and geographical criteria for the establishment of a relationship between the mosaics, these issues facilitated discussion of more complex provenance issues, such as topographical motif and theme transmission routes/modes, and the artistic character of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. These more complex provenance issues were concerned with the motifs and concepts in the mosaics, not composition, so the corpus and the Map were able to be categorised together in these areas as well. There was some divergence between the transmission route of the compositional sources of the Ma„in mosaic, Saint Stephen mosaic, and the Madaba Map, and the transmission route of the motifs and concepts in the entire assemblage. However, this was not a case of the Madaba Map diverging from the corpus, but these three mosaics diverging from the rest of the assemblage in this regard.

CHAPTER THREE

FUNCTION AND MEANING

This chapter utilises the information and analysis from the last two chapters and applies them to the question of function and meaning. We begin by discussing the historical, ecclesiastical, and literary contexts of our mosaic assemblage, as the points raised in these surveys provide information and analysis which supplement the focused discussion of function and meaning later in this chapter. These surveys allow us to move on to a discussion of the relationship between the function of the topographical corpus/Madaba Map and the mosaic"s position in the church. The intent of this section is to indicate the relationship between the function of the corpus and the function of the Map, but with a focus on the implications for function of the mosaic"s position in the church. The discussion of function precedes the analysis of meaning, in order to clarify the scope of a discussion of meaning. In this thesis, the scope of meaning is much wider than that of function, because our principal focus is the iconography of the mosaic, rather than the role of the pavement itself in the ecclesiastical context.

We follow with a discussion of specific issues of the meaning of the topographical/cartographical iconographies in the assemblage, including whether they can be attributed to Chalcedonian or Monophysite communities in *Provincia Arabia*; an issue which is also connected with the previous section on the function of the mosaics. The question here is: is there a divergence between the communities the corpus and the Map can be attributed to in terms of both their function and meaning? The other targeted issue is the meaning of the combination of nilotic and topographical motifs. This iconographical combination is found in both the corpus and the Map, and so it has implications for that relationship, which we will explore. The chapter ends with a general discussion of the meaning of the corpus as opposed to the meaning of the Madaba Map. Therefore, we question the nature of that relationship in terms of more general issues of meaning, in contrast to the targeted issues of meaning which precede this section.

3.1 Historical, ecclesiastical, and literary background

This section surveys three particularly important areas that assist an understanding of the function and meaning of the topographical corpus and the

Map. The first of these areas is the economic history of *Provincia Arabia* in the sixth century, and a brief overview is provided below, insofar as it impinges upon the analysis of the assemblage. This context informs how we can interpret a layer of the meaning shared by the corpus and the Map, and we discuss this at the end of the chapter. Secondly, we discuss the ecclesiastical situation in sixth-century *Provincia Arabia*, which proves particularly important for the discussion on whether mosaics in our assemblage are attributable to Chalcedonian or Monophysite communities, as well as the last section of this thesis on meaning. Lastly, this section discusses one particular example of Byzantine-period literature, Cosmas Indicopleustes" *Christian Topography*, which may significantly influence how the meaning of both the topographical corpus and Madaba Map can be interpreted.

The most pertinent point about the economic background of sixth-century *Provincia Arabia* is that this century saw a great increase in economic prosperity of both *Provincia Arabia* and the three *Palaestinae*.[1] There are several possible reasons for the prosperity of the sixth century, including the caravan trade across the eastern provinces, the security provided by the Christian Arab tribes of the desert, and the *Pax Aeterna* with the Persian Empire.[2] It was also in the sixth century that pilgrimages to the Holy Land increased and brought subsequent positive economic effects to the region.[3] Lastly, and of most relevance to this thesis, is the connection between the economic prosperity of the sixth century and the increase in mosaic production and ecclesiastical construction.[4] Therefore, an increase in mosaic and ecclesiastical construction is an indicator of economic prosperity, and numerous towns in *Provincia Arabia* display this material

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[1] Gatier, p.290.
S. Smith, p.429.
S. Thomas Parker, p.136.
Holum, p.96, p.99.
[2] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.44.
[3] Balty, *Mosaiques de Jordanie*, p.156.
Derek Krueger, „Christian Piety and Practice in the Sixth Century", in *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. by Maas, pp.291-315, (p.302).
E.D Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312-460,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp.135-138.
Wilken, *Byzantine Palestine*, pp.215-216.
[4] Balty, *Mosaiques de Jordanie*, pp.154-155.

affluence in the sixth century, including larger cities such as Madaba[5] and Gerasa,[6] but also smaller towns such as Khirbat al-Samra.[7] This archaeological evidence of economic prosperity continued into the seventh century in *Provincia Arabia*, with evidence of mosaic and ecclesiastical construction and renovation at Mount Nebo (Khirbat al-Mukhayyat) and Khirbat al-Samra, amongst others.[8] Ultimately, this economic background partially explains why topographical/cartographical iconography in *Provincia Arabia* can indicate a prayer for the continued prosperity of the town. Another of the possibilities considered in this chapter, is that some mosaics displaying topographical and cartographical iconography relate a message connected with contemporary ecclesiastical politics. As such, a survey of the ecclesiastical background follows next.

The most important point about the ecclesiastical status of *Provincia Arabia* in the Byzantine period is that its constituent bishoprics: Madaba, Esbus, Philadelphia-Amman, and Gerasa, were under the metropolitan of Bostra, who was under the patriarch of Antioch.[9] In contrast, the neighbouring provinces of the three *Palaestinae* had been under the patriarch of Jerusalem since the Council of Chalcedon in 451.[10] The issue of the patriarchs who had jurisdiction over certain regions was not entirely straightforward. Juvenalius, patriarch of Jerusalem, was awarded ecclesiastical leadership over the three *Palaestinae*, Phoenicia *and Provincia Arabia* by Theodosius II.[11] However, after the decisions of the Council of 451, there are indications that the Church of Antioch felt that too much had been taken from it and that the Church of Jerusalem still felt as though all of its demands had not been met. Therefore, the Church of Antioch

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[5] Timothy Harrison, „History of Madaba" in *Madaba Cultural Heritage,* ed. by Patricia M. Bikai and Thomas A. Dailey, (Amman: American Center of Oriental Research, 1996), pp.1-18, (pp.4-5).
[6] Carl H. Kraeling, „The History of Gerasa", in *Gerasa*, ed. by Kraeling, pp.27-69, (p.65).
[7] Alain Desreumaux and Jean-Baptiste Humbert, „Les Vestiges Chretiens de Khirbet es-Samra en Jordanie" in *Les Eglises de Jordanie et leurs Mosaïques,* ed. by Duval, pp.23-34, (pp.24-25, p.34).
[8] Harrison, p.5.
[9] L. Hunt, p.2.
[10] Yiannis E. Meimaris, *Sacred Names, Saints, Martyrs and Church Officials in the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri pertaining to the Christian Church of Palestine*, Meletemata, (Kentron Hellenikes kai Romaikes Archaiotetos), 2 (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, Research Center for Greek and Roman Antiquity, 1986), p.6.
Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.43.
[11] Meimaris, p.9.

attempted to re-obtain part of what it had agreed to give, and the Church of Jerusalem attempted to include the marginal parts of Phoenicia and *Provincia Arabia* within her boundaries that had been given by Theodosius II but had not been ecclesiastically confirmed. Therefore, the ecclesiastical boundaries of the two patriarchates were not clearly established because many bishoprics changed ecclesiastical districts in accordance with the feelings of their bishops towards certain patriarchates.[12] Ultimately though, Juvenalius only kept the three *Palaestinae*.[13] Even though the patriarchate of Jerusalem had attempted to incorporate *Provincia Arabia* since the fifth century, it ultimately failed, and by 518, had only succeeded in absorbing the southern part, Areopolis.[14] Therefore, throughout the Byzantine period, *Provincia Arabia* was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Antioch, and the three *Palaestinae* were under the jurisdiction of Jerusalem. Topographical (although not cartographical) iconography appears in both *Provincia Arabia* and the *Palaestinae*,[15] so the topographical motifs that compose both iconographies were not restricted by patriarchate and provincial boundaries. Nevertheless, topographical iconography in church mosaics appears most frequently in Byzantine-period *Provincia Arabia* and often displays stylistic deviation from the topographical motifs found in the *Palaestinae*. Therefore, in this sense, the iconographies appear to be more connected with the region under the patriarchate of Antioch, and yet, as is discussed later, it is Jerusalem that is the focus of the Saint Stephen mosaic and the Madaba Map. Moreover, none of these Arabian topographical mosaics depict Antioch. This issue of the focus on Jerusalem is analysed at the end of this chapter.

Unfortunately, after the reign of Justinian, we have no documentation on the episcopates of *Provincia Arabia* and Palestine, other than a post-649 letter from Pope Martin to the bishops of Philadelphia-Amman, Bacatha, and Esbus, authorising Bishop John of Philadelphia to re-organise the ecclesiastical structure

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[12] ibid., pp.11-12.
[13] Jones, II, 892-893.
[14] „Arabia, Province of‟ in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. by Alexander P. Kazhdan, editor- in-chief et al, 3 vols, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), I (AARO-ESKI), p.147.
[15] Moshe Fischer, „The synagogue at Sepphoris‟, *JRA,* 21 (2008), 700-702, (p.701).
Glen W. Bowersock, „The mosaic inscription in the Nile Festival Building at Sepphoris: the House of the daughter of the governor Procopius (AD 517-18?) and her husband Asbolius Patricius‟, *JRA*, 17 (2004), 764-766, (p.766).

of the province[16]. This letter does not assist the assessment of whether the towns with churches containing topographical mosaics were under the patriarchal jurisdiction of Jerusalem or Antioch at the time. Ultimately, we do not know whose jurisdiction bishoprics in the seventh and eighth centuries were under and furthermore, many towns had vacant bishoprics at this time anyway, although mosaic inscriptions tell us that Madaba had a bishop until at least 756.[17] This dearth of evidence for the seventh and eighth centuries affects how confidently the eighth-century topographical mosaics of Ma‚in and Umm al-Rasas can be attributed to a location under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Antioch.

The economic and ecclesiastical histories indicate the status and position of *Provincia Arabia* in the sixth century and highlight the relative lacuna of evidence that follows in the seventh and eighth centuries. The provision of this background allows us to now consider the influence of Cosmas Indicopleustes‟ *Christian Topography* on the artists/craftsmen and patrons of both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. The manuscript, written between 535 and 547,[18] considers the „heresy‟ of believing the heavens spherical as well as the nature, length, breadth, and position of the earth, and the location of Paradise.[19] The main thrust of Cosmas‟ argument was the refutation of pagan theories that the earth is spherical and that the heavens revolve around it, and instead, he asserted that the universe was formed like Moses‟ Tabernacle. Christian Fathers prior to Cosmas had considered that Moses‟ Tabernacle formed a prototype for the form of the universe.[20] Cosmas took this concept and elaborated on it in his treatise.[21] The Tabernacle was divided into two by a veil, reflecting the universe divided into two levels by the firmament. The upper level is heaven and eternal and the lower is transient,[22] the home of humans until the Resurrection. The table of shew-bread of the Tabernacle was meant to represent the earth surrounded by

[16] Piccirillo, *Umayyad Churches*, pp.340-41.
[17] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.36.
[18] Cosmas Indicopleustes, *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, An Egyptian Monk,* ed. and trans. by John W. McCrindle, 2nd edn, (New York: Burt Franklin, 1897), p.x-xi.
[19] Averil Cameron, *The Byzantines,* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p.10.
[20] Hebrews, IX.23, IX.24.
[21] Cosmas Indicopleustes, p.xv.
[22] Kühnel, p.152.

the ocean, and the ocean was encompassed by another earth – Paradise.[23] Cosmas proposed that the earth and heaven were welded together by four walls, making the universe the shape of an oblong vault.[24] An illustrated map of the world accompanied Cosmas" manuscript, so the medieval maps with the text were probably copies of sixth-century originals.[25]

Cosmas" theory of the upper and lower levels of the universe, with the lower being the transient world of humans, is conceptually related to our assemblage, in that the mosaics all depict earthly cities and towns on the floor, beneath the feet of visitors to the church and the congregation. Therefore, it can be argued that the churches bearing these mosaics in *Provincia Arabia* are literally symbolising the lower level of the universe discussed by Cosmas Indicopleustes.

Contextual evidence suggests that the ideas in the *Topography* were influential in the period of the production of our assemblage. This is an important point because, if the text was not influential in the sixth century, then it would be precarious to attribute it as an influence on the assemblage, unless the evidence was overwhelming. Most notably in this regard, Cosmas primarily asserted Moses" view of the universe in the *Topography*. Moses was highly regarded as a cosmographer in Imperial Byzantium and Emperor Justinian himself protested against the pagan view of the spherical universe. Justinian also implied an alignment with the view of the Universe asserted by Moses in Genesis, which was strongly supported by the School of Antioch.[26] Justinian implied his side at the

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[23] Maja Kominko, „The Map of Cosmas, The Albi Map and the Tradition of Ancient Geography", *MHR*, 20, 2 (2005), 163-86, (p.166).
Anonymous, „The Cathedral of Edessa", in *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453: Sources and Documents,* ed. by Cyril Mango, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp.57-60, (p.58, 4).
Kathleen McVey, „The Domed Church as Microcosm: Literary Roots of an Architectural Symbol", *DOP*, 37 (1983), 91-121, (p.98).
Narsai, *Homelies de Narsaï sur la Creation: Edition critique du Texte syriaque introduction et Traduction francaise*, ed. by Philippe Gignoux, Patrologia Orientalis, 34 (Turnhout; Paris: Brepols, 1968), 1.396-98; 3:308-25.
[24] Cosmas Indicopleustes, p.xv-xvi.
[25] Kominko, p.163.
[26] Frederick W. Norris, „Christ, Christology", in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. by Ferguson, pp.242-251, (p.247).
George A. Jackson, *The Post-Nicene Greek Fathers,* (New York: D.Appleton and Company, 1883), pp.5-8.

Council of Constantinople in 553 when he directed his anathemas against Origenism.[27] Furthermore, the concept in the *Topography* of two states of existence (*katastases*) and of the universe consisting of two superimposed spaces ultimately came from Antiochene theologians, such as Theodore of Mopsuestia[28] (350-428), whose works were amongst the pillars of the east Syrian school. However, unlike the Syrian exegetes, Cosmas was interested in the minute details of how the universe was created, and for this, he turned to ancient Greek science.[29]

Therefore, Cosmas was not inventing much in the way of new science or exegesis; nor was he responsible for imbuing the Tabernacle with "cosmic symbolism". The concept had already been discussed by Philo, Flavius, Josephus, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Pseudo-Chrysostomus. However, it was Cosmas who gave a physical form to the symbol of the Tabernacle and asserted it as the structural form of the universe.[30] Nevertheless, the concepts were already well-known before the *Topography*, which supports the possibility that these concepts influenced the iconography in the assemblage. The influence and ideas in Cosmas' *Topography*, as well as the period in which it was produced, also support the reading of the Madaba Map later in this chapter, which relates a layer of the Map's meaning to the concept of Moses as a cosmographer.

This section initially demonstrated that *Provincia Arabia* enjoyed an economic prosperity from the sixth century onwards that is reflected in mosaic and church construction and probably partially prompted the use of topographical motifs, which could be used as a visual prayer for the continued prosperity of the town. Secondly, the ecclesiastical historical survey demonstrated that *Provincia Arabia* was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Antioch, and that in

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[27] Irfan Shahîd, „The Madaba Mosaic Map Revisited: Some New Observations on its Purpose and Meaning" in *Madaba Map Centenary,* ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.147-154, (p.153).
A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series: The seven ecumenical councils, ed. and trans. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 14 vols, (Grand Rapids, Mich: WM.B. Eerdmans, 1975-1979; repr.1983), XIV, 316-320, (esp. p.318), no.iii and p.320, nos. iv-vi.
Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought,* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp.65-72.
[28] Norris, *Christ, Christology*, p.249.
[29] Kominko, p.165.
[30] Kühnel, p.153.

comparison with the towns under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Jerusalem, the cities of *Provincia Arabia* display the bulk of the Byzantine-period topographical mosaics and the *only* cartographical mosaic. This survey also revealed that the ecclesiastical distribution of towns and cities in *Provincia Arabia* are uncertain after the seventh century and therefore, we need to be cautious when dealing with this period and later. Lastly, Cosmas" *Christian Topography* is related to the ecclesiastical situation in *Provincia Arabia* in the sixth century, as it deals with influential religious-topographical concepts of the time. Primarily, the idea expressed in the text of the lower level of the universe which encapsulates the transient world of mortals, is manifested blatantly in the churches containing our assemblage, as here, the cities of that lower level are depicted beneath the feet of those who enter. This last issue presents a layer of meaning that is shared by the topographical corpus and Madaba Map.[31]

3.2 Architectural context and function

These surveys allow us to now discuss the relationship between the functions of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. This analysis prefaces that of meaning because the analysis of function facilitates a better understanding of the meanings in our mosaic assemblage. This is the case particularly because this discussion displays the scope of what we would call „function" in the analysis of mosaic pavements, which do not display clear functional attributes in the way that many pottery, glass, or silverware items do. The method in this section is an analysis of the architectural position and context of the mosaic in the church. It is considered in this thesis that this is the best method of attributing function to a floor mosaic. However, this section does not intend to be exhaustive on the issue of the function of the assemblage. Its intention is to look only at the relationship between the function of the mosaic and its architectural context/its location in the mosaic programme of the church. This method causes us to question what architectural context and the position of the topographical component in the mosaic programme tells us about the pavement"s function. Moreover, this method directs us to look at the relationship between the function of the corpus and the

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[31] Kupfer, p.279.

Madaba Map, in terms of their position in the church and in the mosaic programme.

The possibility explored in this section is that the mosaics of our assemblage had a liturgical function. In order to attribute a liturgical function to a mosaic pavement, it should have a central position between the priest and the congregation, but it must also bear subject matter that is relevant to the content of the liturgy. The topographical mosaic border in the eighth-century Church of Saint Stephen (**3.1**) displays this central position in the church. The architecture of the church consists of an apsed presbyterium with a sacristy on its south side, and a chapel with a northern apse. The topographical border is found in the northern and southern intercolumnar rows of the nave. This central position implies that the congregation was meant to focus on the iconography, and the topographical content of the mosaic is located between the priest and the congregation.[32] However, the subject matter of the mosaic is not related to the liturgy. This evidence suggests that visitors to the church and the congregation were meant to focus on the pavement and that it was meant to inspire their prayers, but that it was not incorporated into the liturgy.

The Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa also contains a topographical mosaic in a central position in the church (**3.2**). The Church of Saint John the Baptist is part of a complex including the Churches of Saint George and Saints Cosmas and Damianus. The group consists of a central church flanked by two *parecclesia*. There are remains of the central church and inscriptions date this group of three churches to between 529 and 533.[33] The Church of Saint John the Baptist has a central plan and its space was divided into three sections. There is an interior space bounded by four columns which also support the roof. There is also a horseshoe apse at the east end of the church and external niches on either side of the lateral entrances. The plan of the Church of Saint John the Baptist appears to be a reduced version of the plan used for the Cathedral at Bostra, built

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[32] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, pp.238-239.
[33] Crowfoot, p.241.

around twenty years earlier (c. 512-513),[34] which possibly indicates the importance of this church at Gerasa. The topographical mosaic was found in the irregular spaces to the north and south of the central field.[35] The location of the Church of Saint John the Baptist in a complex, as well as the similarity of its plan to the Cathedral in the metropolitan city might indicate the importance of the edifice. The topographical mosaic in the Church of Saint John the Baptist contains architectonic depictions of Egyptian cities, a tradition going back to the nilotic mosaics of Roman-period Italy. Therefore, although the central position of the mosaic indicates that it was meant to be a focal point for the congregation and visitors to the church, its content was again irrelevant to the liturgy.

The final example from the corpus that demonstrates the trend in *Provincia Arabia* is the topographical mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat **(3.3)**. The mosaic is also located between the priest at the altar and the congregation, but again contains nothing that would suggest that the mosaic had a place in the liturgy. The mosaic was to the left of the congregation"s vision, as were the topographical mosaics in the Church of the Priest Wa"il and the Church of the Lions (also located in intercolumnar spaces) **(3.4)**.[36] There is only a limited amount of information about the plan of the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius, as the apse was destroyed down to the foundations with only one course of stones remaining.[37] Ultimately though, the churches of Khirbat al-Mukhayyat are all basically of the same architectural plan, typified by simplicity of plan and ornamentation. Such simplicity might be expected in the churches of a small rustic town,[38] but this is an architectural characteristic of the town, rather than an indication of the importance of topographical iconography to the patrons of the mosaic or the congregation viewing it. The topographical mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius is situated under the central archway. It is the first intercolumnar panel on the north side, coming from the east between pilasters one and three. Five

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[34] ibid., p.243.
[35] Piccirillo, *Art of Jordan,* p.113.
[36] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.242.
Piccirillo, *Activity of the Mosaicists*, p.394.
[37] Saller and Bagatti, p.40.
[38] ibid., p.45.

intercolumnar panels survive in the church and all contain aquatic themes. Ultimately, the topographical mosaic was conspicuous to the congregation, but not central within the mosaic programme of the church.[39] This conspicuous position indicates that the topographical part of the mosaic was meant to inspire prayers for the town and community, but was not meant to be part of the liturgy.

Lastly, we look at the implications for function of the Madaba Map"s position in the church. The architectural plan of the Byzantine Church of the Map was a monoapsidal basilical shape and divided into a nave and two aisles by a double row of four columns with a raised sanctuary reaching the first row of columns (**3.5**). The church had a narthex and atrium to the west and two mosaiced rooms to the south-west.[40] Within this plan, the Madaba Map covered three naves of the original basilica[41] and the length of two bays in the eastern part of the church.[42] The size and plan of the ancient church[43] fairly accurately inform us of the original extent of the Madaba Map, and Piccirillo demonstrated that the modern church follows the perimeters of the ancient structure[44] Ultimately, it seems that the original extent of the Madaba Map was not much greater than the current limits of the mosaic, which is 15.7 m x 5.6 m.[45] Therefore, the size and position of the Madaba Map, even in its current fragmented state, indicate that it was a much more focal part of the mosaic programme than any other mosaic in our assemblage.

The Madaba Map"s position within the architectural context of the church has implications for its possible functions. As demonstrated above, the Madaba Map takes a central position in the church, as do most of the mosaics in the topographical corpus of *Provincia Arabia* as well. However, apart from this general similarity between the position of the Madaba Map and some mosaics of

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[39] ibid., p.63.
[40] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.94.
[41] Clermont-Ganneau, p.235.
[42] Donceel-Voûte, p.520.
[43] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.26.
[44] ibid., p.27
[45] ibid., p.27.
Eugenio Alliata, „The Pilgrimage Routes during the Byzantine Period in Transjordan" in *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.121-124, (p.121).

the topographical corpus, the Madaba Map diverges when we come to its iconographical content. This content suggests that it is possible that the Madaba Map had a function in the liturgy. This assertion is made because the Madaba Map was originally positioned between the priest in the altar or chancel and the congregation at the other end of the church. However, this position in itself is not enough of a basis on which to claim a liturgical function for a mosaic pavement, as other mosaics in the topographical corpus also take this position. In the case of the Madaba Map, the evidence that suggests liturgical function also lies in the fact that the mosaic represented the revelation of the story of Christian salvation, which would have given it a place in the liturgy.[46]

This section demonstrated that both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map had a tendency to be placed in a central or at least conspicuous position in the floor mosaic programme of the church. This section has also indicated the close relationship between function and meaning, particularly through the discussion of mosaic content related to the liturgy. The conspicuous, but not central position of the topographical mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius indicates a similar function to other mosaics of the topographical corpus: that it was meant to inspire prayers for the prosperity of the town, and hence the tendency towards a central or conspicuous location in the church. Conversely, in the case of the Madaba Map, its iconographical content *and* position between the congregation and the priest imply that it had a role in the liturgy. There appears to be no correlation between the architectural extravagance of the church itself and the importance of topographical iconography to the patron who commissioned the mosaic or the laity visiting the church. Therefore, this section has emphasised the divergence between the functions of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, specifically in regard to the liturgy.

3.3 Chalcedonian or Monophysite?

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[46] Shahîd, *Map Revisited*, p.152.
Robert Ousterhout, „The Holy Space: Architecture and the Liturgy" in *Heaven on Earth: Art and the Church in Byzantium*, ed. by Linda Safran, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), pp. 81-120, (p.98).

This section involves discussion of both function and meaning. It also develops the issue of the ecclesiastical context of the mosaics, which was introduced in the last section. This section discusses the relationship between the corpus and the Map in terms of their patronage and use by either the Chalcedonian or Monophysite communities of *Provincia Arabia*. The methodology involves initially ascertaining that there was a significant Monophysite presence in *Provincia Arabia*. This presence being established, the next method is to note the bishops of each Arabian diocese present at the Council of Chalcedon and to compare that with the presence of Arabian bishops at later councils. This method is used because a decrease in the attendance of Arabian bishops after the Council of Chalcedon might indicate a subsequent lack of support for the outcomes of that Council. The conclusions drawn from this method need to be handled cautiously, but some interesting possibilities are suggested by it. Lastly, there is a discussion of the artistic manifestations of the Chalcedonian position as opposed to the Monophysite position, and an assessment of whether topographical/cartographical iconography fit within these manifestations.

Let us begin with some preliminary points. This section focuses on Monophysitism, rather than any other heresy, because it was the most prevalent non-Chalcedonian group in the province in the Byzantine period.[47] Monophysitism held that there was no unity between Christ the God and Christ the man.[48] In contrast, the Council of Chalcedon in 451[49] decided that Christ existed in two inseparable natures. This decision was opposed in Egypt and increasingly in most of Syria, as it was believed that there could only be the divine nature in the incarnate Christ.[50] In the sixth century, the Emperor Justinian attempted to find a compromise which would satisfy Severus and the Monophysites as well as Chalcedonians, but his failure resulted in a separate Monophysite hierarchy.[51] Although the Council of Chalcedon was opposed in

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[47] Irfan Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century: Political and Military History,* 1 vol, 2 pts., (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), I, p.xxvi.
[48] Von Simson, p.73.
[49] Norris, *Christ, Christology*, p.248.
[50] William H.C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement: Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p.x.
[51] ibid., p.255.

Egypt and Syria, Donceel-Voûte suggested that, conversely, *Provincia Arabia* was never an ardent supporter of Monophysitism.[52]

Donceel-Voûte"s suggestion warrants exploration, particularly regarding the presence of the Ghassanids in *Provincia Arabia* and the religious effects they might have had. *Provincia Arabia* was the „headquarters" of the staunchly Monophysite Ghassanids[53] and there was a strong Ghassanid presence in *Provincia Arabia*, Palestine, and Phoenicia. This group remained loyal to Monophysitism throughout the sixth century.[54] These „headquarters" refer to the *Basileia* conferred upon the Ghassanids by Justinian in around 530. This status was downgraded by Maurice in the early 580s but was possibly restored by Phocas on his Imperial accession. Therefore, it is evident that the Ghassanids were a strong presence in *Provincia Arabia* for most of the sixth century. The phylarchal jurisdiction of the Ghassanids extended to *Provincia Arabia* and *Palaestina Secunda* and *Tertia*.[55] Furthermore, the involvement of the Ghassanids in Monophysite ecclesiastical affairs was of the highest order. It is known that in around 540, the Ghassanid federate king Arethas had Jacob Baradaeus and Theodore appointed bishops.[56] Therefore, it is demonstrable that there was a Monophysite presence in *Provincia Arabia*. This presence should cause us to question whether and to what extent the communities of *Provincia Arabia* were affected by it.

Answers to this question must be sought in several different areas. There is evidence of Monophysitism as a clear threat to Chalcedonianism in our period in *Provincia Arabia*. However, it is not clear that this threat can be attributed to the Ghassanids. The evidence takes the form of a letter from Pope Gregory to a bishop Marianus, dated 601. This letter was a reply to Marianus" (the Chalcedonian bishop of Gerasa) request for relics. Shahîd proposed that Marianus

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[52] Donceel-Voûte, p.538.
[53] Shahîd, *BASC* I, p.34-35.
[54] ibid., p.208.
Irfan Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*: *Ecclesiastical History*, 1 vol, 2 pts., (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), II, 922, 925.
[55] Shahîd, *BASC* I, 627.
[56] ibid., p.34.

wanted these relics as a counterweight to the spread of Monophysitism in *Provincia Arabia*.[57] Therefore, this early-seventh century letter is further evidence against Donceel-Voûte"s suggestion that *Provincia Arabia* was never much at risk from Monophysitism.

There is evidence that carries the implications of the letter from Pope Gregory even further in regard to the status of heresies in *Provincia Arabia*. During the sixth century, Julianist, as well as Severan Monophysitism attempted to establish a hold in *Provincia Arabia*. To Pope Gregory, the province was *Arabia haeresium ferax,* which it was from the time of Origen up to the sixth century. According to Shahîd, Monophysitism became "rampant" in *Provincia Arabia* at this time and the Cathedral of Bostra was a monument to this heresy.[58] However, this evidence cannot be used to say that any particular city or town was Monophysite as opposed to Chalcedonian, or when.

The question at this point is whether and the extent to which the attempts of Monophysitism to establish a hold in the province, and the presence of the Ghassanids, affected the religious inclinations of the congregations of the Arabian churches discussed in this thesis. There is an indication of the answer to this question in a letter addressed not only to the clerics of *Provincia Arabia*, but also the people, in the time of Justin II, during the Tritheistic heresy of Monophysitism. The fact that this letter was also addressed to the people suggests that the congregations of the province took a keen interest in theological and ecclesiastical matters.[59] Therefore, it is very likely that the ecclesiastical communities of *Provincia Arabia* were affected by the presence of Monophysitism in their province. It is whether they were affected to the point of actually becoming Monophysite that is the difficult question to answer.

Therefore, we have first established the presence of Monophysitism alongside the Chalcedonian communities in *Provincia Arabia*. Next, it must be established whether this bears upon the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. Part of

[57] Shahîd, *BASC* II, 938.
[58] ibid., pp.937-938.
[59] ibid., p.820.

the method for attributing topographical/cartographical iconography to Chalcedonianism or Monophysitism must include an examination of the bishops present at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This method shows the bishops prepared to participate in this Council, and suggests that if bishops from these cities did not attend later Councils, that there was declining support for the Chalcedonian position. From *Provincia Arabia*, the bishops Constantine of Bostra, Zosis of Esbus, Plancus of Gerasa, Gaianus of Madaba, and Eulogius of Philadelphia were present in 451. However, at later Councils, the number of Arabian bishops in attendance was greatly reduced. For example, at the Council of Constantinople in 459, from *Provincia Arabia*, only Theodose of Canotha attended. Finally, in 553, the second Council of Constantinople was called by Justinian in order to condemn the Three Chapters. From *Provincia Arabia*, only bishop John of Bostra (the metropolitan of the province) and Dorymenius of Adraa attended.[60] This low attendance from *Provincia Arabia* is significant considering that, amongst the Three Chapters, was Theodore of Mopsuestia. Theodore was amongst those who believed that the universe consisted of two states of existence.[61] This concept is reflected in Cosmas" model of the universe and also, in a simpler form, in the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map, as discussed earlier in this chapter. This evidence might suggest that, if the Arabian patrons were prepared to commission mosaics that referred to certain theological concepts, these patrons and perhaps also the community, adhered to and believed in those same concepts. These factors would then imply that the Arabian communities considered in this thesis believed in the teachings of Theodore of Mopsuestia. This argument is based on the idea that the assemblage reflects concepts in Cosmas Indicopleustes" *Topography*, but this basis cannot be verified.

There are other possible reasons for the decline of Arabian bishops attending Councils after the Council of Chalcedon in 451. It is most relevant to this thesis to focus on the Council in 553, as it falls within the chronological period that this thesis is concerned with. At the Fifth General Council in 553, Justinian

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[60] Devreesse, *Patriarcat*, pp.136-141.
[61] Robert Devreesse, *Essai sur Theodore de Mopsueste,* Studi e testi, (Biblioteca apostolica vaticana), 141, (Citta del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1948), pp.100-101.

condemned the Three Chapters and Origen,[62] and there was ultimately no consolation for the Monophysites. In particular, the eighth anathema permitted the expression "out of two natures" but denied that this resulted in "one nature".[63] Prior to the 553 Council, Justinian made unsuccessful attempts at reconciliation with the Monophysites in 531 and 535-6.[64] However, in 536, the Monophysite Christology was definitively condemned at the Council of Constantinople and in August 536, Justinian issued Novel 42 to the patriarch Menas, which confirmed the acts of the anti-Monophysite synod.[65] It is possible then that the low attendance of Arabian bishops in 553 was related to their support of Monophysitism, and/or the Three Chapters, including perhaps, as indicated previously, specifically their support for the teachings of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Ultimately, it cannot be said for sure why so few bishops from *Provincia Arabia* attended the Council in 553. However, considering that the decline started as soon as the next Council after Chalcedon in 459, it could be suggested that the reason was related to the Arabian bishops" support for Monophysitism.

The next method of enquiry is a discussion of the artistic manifestations of Monophysitism as opposed to Chalcedonianism. This discussion might illuminate some characteristics of Monophysite art, as opposed to Chalcedonian, and therefore allow us to attribute topographical/cartographical iconography to one or the other. In the Byzantine Empire, by the end of the seventh century, the depiction of animals and plants became unpopular again in favour of depictions of Christ and the saints. Conversely, it is possible that the depiction of animals and plants rather than Christ can be connected with Monophysitism, and later with Iconoclasm.[66] Unfortunately though, it appears strongly that there is mostly nothing in church architecture and decoration that could conclusively identify a church with one Christian community over another. Gatier even suggested that it is *impossible* to distinguish a Monophysite building or a Chalcedonian mosaic and that there is no rapport between doctrine and the architecture or decoration of

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[62] McVey, p.108.
[63] Frend, p.282.
[64] Shahîd, *BASC* II, 735.
[65] Shahîd, *BASC* I, 207.
[66] Maguire, *Earth and Ocean*, p.83.

the church.[67] It has been argued that Monophysite churches avoided iconic decoration. However, Chalcedonian churches also often bear no extant figural decoration.[68] Mundell ultimately proposed that it was uncertain as to whether non-figural art could be connected with Monophysitism, but there was a definite overlap.[69] Therefore, we largely have to use literary evidence, rather than archaeological, to assess whether communities were Chalcedonian or Monophysite. However, on uncommon occasions, an inscription identifying a known Chalcedonian bishop or revealing a dedication that might exclude certain Christian groups can be used to conclude which Christian community used the church.[70]

Another issue we should consider, and it bears upon the bishop attendance at ecclesiastical Councils, is the possibility that the bishop of a diocese had a religious allegiance to one group, while the community had another. For example, we cannot necessarily extrapolate from the decline of bishop attendance at Councils, that their entire community shared their loyalties. Even within one community, there were probably Chalcedonian and Monophysite groups. As such, it is also difficult to establish whether some or any churches excluded members of the congregation or community considered heretical. It is likely that cathedrals and parochial churches were controlled by one group. However, several different groups may have influenced ecclesiastical structures such as pilgrimage churches or martyr"s shrines, as these structures attracted a broad diversity of people. Evidence of how these groups co-existed might be indicated by the fact that there was at least one monastery in Egypt which contained both a Chalcedonian and Monophysite church.[71] Clearly, this aspect renders it even more difficult to allocate topographical/cartographical mosaic iconography to the Chalcedonian or Monophysite doctrine.

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[67] Gatier, p.295.
[68] Schick, p.10
[69] Marlia Mundell, „Monophysite Church Decoration", in *Iconoclasm: papers given at the ninth spring symposium of Byzantine studies, University of Birmingham, March 1975*, ed. by Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin, (Birmingham, Eng.: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1977), pp.59-74, (p.74).
[70] Schick, p.11.
[71] Mundell, p.59.

It is for these reasons that the fact that *Provincia Arabia* was under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Antioch has not featured yet in this discussion. Nevertheless, it is relevant to mention here that the patriarchate of Antioch was officially Monophysite for short periods of time until the Chalcedonian hierarchy was firmly established after the expulsion of Severus of Antioch in 519. From approximately 540 onwards, enclaves of Monophysites in Constantinople and in the monasteries of Northern Syria and Mesopotamia developed into the "hierarchy in exile" of the Jacobite Church. There was a system in place of Chalcedonian bishops in the towns, shadowed by Monophysite bishops in the monasteries.[72] However, the strongly Monophysite proclivities of Antioch would not have necessarily affected the cities and towns of *Provincia Arabia*, according to the pattern discussed above.

Ultimately, there is not enough evidence to confirm whether topographical or cartographical mosaic iconography found function and meaning in the Chalcedonian or Monophysite churches of *Provincia Arabia*. Therefore, it cannot be said whether there was any divergence between the topographical corpus and the Map in this regard. Moreover, there is no evidence of the main features, if any, of Monophysite art. *Provincia Arabia* was under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Antioch and had a strong Ghassanid presence throughout the Byzantine period, but this does not necessarily mean that every town and city in the province followed their Monophysite leanings. In fact, it appears as though there could have been religious diversity between the bishop and the community, and even within the community. Furthermore, because the art itself does not help us to determine the religious leanings of the churches" congregations, we cannot say which towns were Monophysite or Chalcedonian and when. Although there was a strong Monophysite presence in *Provincia Arabia* particularly between the fifth and seventh centuries, we cannot identify this artistically in any of the churches considered in this thesis.

3.4 The combination of nilotic and topographical motifs

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[72] ibid., p.64.

The last section provided a connection between the issues of function and meaning. This section moves on completely to issues of meaning and looks at one particular question of the shared meaning between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map: the reasons for the frequent combination of nilotic and topographical motifs, found in both the corpus and the Map. This question is too large to be considered in the general and final discussion of meaning, and this motif combination was another of the criteria given in the Introduction for the establishment of a relationship between the corpus and the Map in the first place. The methodology applied here involves a discussion of the history of the motif, its place within Christian art, and how the meaning of the combination can be ascertained from its artistic context. Ultimately, it is demonstrated that the meanings of nilotic and topographical motifs in themselves, are similar. Therefore, it is questioned what this similarity indicates about the reasons why the motifs were combined. It is also questioned then, what the presence of this iconographical combination in both the corpus and the Map means for their relationship.

With very few exceptions, topographical church mosaics in *Provincia Arabia* are accompanied by nilotic motifs, including the Madaba Map. The nilotic theme incorporated motifs of plants and animals of the Nile, as well as the embankments of the harbour, the homes and scenes of Alexandria, fishermen and merchants in boats loaded with amphorae, the temples and religious feasts of the Nile, as well as the Nile itself.[73] There are two types of nilotic/topographical scene in the church mosaics of *Provincia Arabia*. The first type consists of a topographical scene, often a town symbolised by an isolated church, with associated nilotic landscape motifs. The second type is seen in the two sixth-century churches at Gerasa, where the topographical scene itself is composed of Egyptian cities in architectonic form. Therefore, in the second category, the architectonic motif is both nilotic *and* topographical.

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[73] Janine Balty, „Themes nilotiques dans la mosaïque tardive du Proche-Orient", in *Alessandria e il Mondo Ellenistico-Romano: Studi in Onore di Achille Adriani*, a cura di Nicola Bonacasa e Antonino de Vita, Studi e materiali 4-6, 3 vols (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1983-1984; repr. 1992), III, 827-834, (p.827).

Nilotic iconography was not popular in the eastern provinces until the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries,[74] and it was probably the Hellenistic influences in near eastern art that delayed the iconography's popularity. However, by the third quarter of the fourth century, there was an impetus to find themes and motifs that were neutral enough to be used in churches. Mythological scenes could not be used anymore because of their distastefulness to the flourishing Christian communities. Furthermore, in the fourth century and until the later-fifth century, geometric themes,[75] particularly the so-called "rainbow style" became popular in the eastern provinces. Therefore, it is likely that artists/craftsmen and patrons sought motifs which would complement this style, and nilotic iconography consisted of motifs which would. Subsequently, the iconography became popular in the fifth and sixth centuries in the east.[76]

Nilotic iconography enjoyed great success with patrons in the eastern provinces up until the Umayyad invasion. This eighth-century decrease in popularity in the region probably occurred because of iconoclasm, both Byzantine and provincial. However, even after the Umayyad invasion, the eighth-century Church of Saint Stephen contains a mosaic bearing nilotic motifs. Nevertheless, the majority of nilotic/topographical mosaics are found between the fourth and sixth centuries in *Provincia Arabia*, Syria, and Palestine, including: the Church of the Multiplication at Tabgha,[77] Sarrin in Osrhoene, which contains a mosaic with a nilotic border around a mythological-themed mosaic,[78] the villa of Beit Jibrin in Palestine, which displays a nilotic border, the Church of Saint John the Baptist and the Church of Saints Peter and Paul at Gerasa, the Church of Zay, the Church of Saint John at Khirbat al-Samra, Umm al-Manabi,, on Jebel „Ajlun, and the pavement in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat.[79]

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[74] Janine Balty, „Themes Nilotiques dans la mosaique tardive du Proche-Orient", in *Mosaiques Antiques du Proche-Orient, Chronologie, Iconographie, Interpretation,* (Paris: Annales Litteraires de l'Universite de Besancon, 551; Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1995), pp.245-254, (p.245, p.251).
Balty, *Themes Nilotiques* 1992, p.832.
[75] Maguire, *Earth and Ocean*, p.6.
[76] Balty, *Themes Nilotiques* 1995, p.252.
[77] Balty, *Themes Nilotiques* 1992, p.828.
[78] Janine Balty, *La Mosaïque de Sarrîn (Osrhoene),* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1990), pp.13-15.
[79] Balty, *Themes Nilotiques* 1995, p.248.
Piccirillo and Attiyat, p.348.

A nilotic cityscape was also found in the House of Kyrios Leontius at Beth Shean, which contains depictions of the god Nile, a cityscape labelled "Alexandria", and a Nilometre. This mosaic is dated to the middle of the fifth century.[80] Nilotic and topographical motifs are also found in the Nile Festival building at Sepphoris, datable to around 400 or the early-fifth century. The Nile Festival mosaic displays personifications of the Nile and Egypt, as well as architectonic depictions of Alexandria and the Nilometre.[81] This survey demonstrates that the nilotic/topographical mosaic combination was not unique to *Provincia Arabia*, and the earlier date of the nilotic/topographical mosaics from Syria and Palestine further supports the transmission route conclusions reached in chapter two.[82] Therefore, this aspect of nilotic/topographical iconography is also about its origins, which were the same for both the corpus and the Madaba Map.

The artistic context in which depictions of the Nile itself are sometimes found might suggest something about its significance to the patrons who commissioned these mosaics. The Nile was considered to be one of the four rivers of Paradise and most people believed in their existence. The four rivers provided a link between the world of mortal humans and Paradise.[83] Piccirillo felt that the fact that the Nile was one of the four Rivers of Paradise might be a key to the meaning of nilotic iconography.[84] However, nilotic motifs in *Provincia Arabia* were often depicted without reference to the other three rivers and in that case we need to be cautious about attributing a common meaning to nilotic iconography and the Rivers of Paradise motifs. The four rivers together signified Paradise and the living water of the renewal of human nature and the salvation of humankind.[85] Nilotic iconography in itself does not appear to have signified the same elements.

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[80] R. and A. Ovadiah, p.35.
[81] Zeev Weiss and Rina Talgam, „The Nile Building and its Mosaics: mythological representations in early Byzantine Sepphoris", in *JRA: Supplementary Series Number 49, The Roman and Byzantine Near East, Volume* 3, ed. by J.H Humphrey, pp.55-90, (pp.60-62).
[82] Chapter 2.3.
[83] Henry Maguire, „The Nile and the Rivers of Paradise" in *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.179-184, (p.179).
[84] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.37.
[85] Jean-Baptiste Humbert, „The Rivers of Paradise in the Byzantine Church Near Jabaliyah – Gaza" in *Madaba Map Centenary*, ed. by Piccirillo and Alliata, pp.216-218, (p.218).

If the meaning of depictions of the Nile on its own or with the other three Rivers of Paradise varies, then we need to assess what depictions of the Nile on its own and its associated motifs signify. Maguire interpreted that in the Nile Festival mosaic at Sepphoris and other locations, the depictions of the Nile on its own were propitious, intended as a prayer for the continued prosperity and fruitfulness of the river. Likewise, this propitious purpose appears to have been the meaning of the nilotic/topographical scene in the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa and in the Church of Saint Stephen, because the nilotic motifs here are found in the same context as other motifs indicative of prosperity, such as vintage and pastoralism motifs, and baskets filled with fruit.[86] However, in the context of the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen, it is unlikely that the locals of Umm al-Rasas were concerned with the prosperity of the Nile, because these nilotic motifs are combined with topographical motifs depicting a range of towns, not just in Egypt, but also in *Provincia Arabia* and Palestine. Therefore, it is more likely that the river had become a generic propitious symbol and prayer for the prosperity of *their* town, especially considering that the sixth century was a period of economic prosperity in *Provincia Arabia*, as discussed earlier.[87] Likewise, the architectonic depictions of their towns and churches in mosaics were also probably intended to focus visitors to the church and members of the congregation on prayers for the continued prosperity of the town.

A proposal must now be forwarded for why the mosaicists of *Provincia Arabia* combined nilotic and topographical motifs and what the consequent significance of that combination was. As discussed in chapter one, the concept of architectonic topographical motifs may have begun with depictions of nilotic cities, such as in the nilotic Praeneste mosaic and later, the theme was added to with depictions of Jerusalem.[88] Therefore, if architectonic topographical motifs originally came from the broader category of nilotic iconography, it may have been a short step for patrons and artists/craftsmen to combining generic topographical motifs with nilotic landscape motifs. It is possible that the traditional combination of nilotic and topographical motifs was preserved in pattern books or other transmission

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[86] Maguire, *Rivers of Paradise*, p.181.
[87] Chapter 3.2.
[88] Chapter 1.2.

modes discussed in chapter two and then, in this form, moved between Syria, Palestine, and *Provincia Arabia*.[89]

Nilotic motifs became generic propitious symbols in Byzantine and Umayyad-period *Provincia Arabia*, rather than symbols specifically intended to propitiate the Nile. The propitious aspect of nilotic iconography might have been combined with the propitious architectonic depictions of local churches and the town itself, thus amplifying the prayer for the continued prosperity of the town. The propitious aspect of both the nilotic and topographical motifs presents an answer to the question of why the motifs were frequently combined in the mosaics of *Provincia Arabia*. Simultaneously, the possibly shared origins of the motifs and then, their combination in pattern books or other transmission modes could also explain the frequent iconographical combination in our assemblage. Lastly, when nilotic iconography is not presented with the other three rivers of Paradise, we can probably relate their meanings only in the most basic sense, if at all. Therefore, in this category, because both the mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map contain nilotic motifs, this section has displayed another area in which these mosaics can be categorised together. And, as is elaborated on in the next section, it presents a shared layer of meaning between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map.

3.5 Some general points on meaning: Cosmic or earthly?

The final section deals with several interpretations of the meaning of the mosaics of the topographical corpus and how they relate to the meaning of the Madaba Map. Although we are dealing with a number of different compositions, styles, and content in the topographical corpus alone, our interpretation of the meaning of these mosaics can be broadly divided into cosmic and earthly. In essence, were these topographical mosaics and the Madaba Map about religious matters, or were they about more earthly issues, perhaps related to contemporary ecclesiastical politics and/or the civic aspirations of that town? It is possible that *all* of these interpretations apply to some mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. This section is divided into a discussion of each interpretation

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[89] Chapter 2.3, 2.4.

and then some conclusions are drawn that add to our analysis of the nature of the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. It is also in this section that we come back to the issue of „layers of meaning"[90] and how this affects the relationship between the mosaics.

The most prevalent theory about the meaning of both topographical and cartographical church mosaic iconography is that it represents the church as a microcosm of the earth.[91] In iconography as well as in literature, there are indications from at least the fifth century that the church building could be viewed as a microcosm of the universe. In this model, the *oikoumene*, or the earth of men, is represented by the level of the soil, which literally, was the position of the mosaics in our assemblage - at the feet of pilgrims to the church.[92] This concept is also found in Cosmas Indicopleustes" *Christian Topography*, which was discussed earlier, and it may have been one of the concepts that prompted the depiction of cities of earth on church mosaic pavements in *Provincia Arabia*. Both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map are depicted in a context of animals, marine life, plants, and other aspects of the earth. Bagatti suggested that the repertoire of motifs that commonly appeared in the churches of *Provincia Arabia* represented an advanced symbolic concept of earth with motifs such as bulls, fishermen, boatmen, people labouring, Seasons and Months, (which personify time), vintage, hunting, and tilling, amongst others.[93]

For example, in the nave mosaic of the Church of Saint Sergius at Umm al-Rasas, there are personifications of Sea and Earth. There are also personifications of Earth in the upper chapel of the Priest John and the Church of Saint George at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat. These personifications of Earth can be categorised with personifications of Sea, such as is found in the Church of the Apostles at Madaba.[94] As such, the architectonic topographical motifs and scenes of every mosaic in the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map are part of this advanced

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[90] Kupfer, p.279.
[91] McVey, p.98.
Hans G. Thümmel, „Zur Deutung der Mosaikkarte von Madeba", *ZDPV*, 89 (1973), 66-79, (p.68).
[92] Donceel-Voûte, p.522.
[93] Saller and Bagatti, p.137.
[94] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.38.

concept of the earth within the context of the church. The Syriac hymn about the Cathedral of Edessa expands this theme of the microcosm of earth as follows:

"*Indeed, it is an admirable thing that in its smallness it should resemble the great world, Not in size, but in type: waters surround it, as the sea (surrounds the earth); Its ceiling is stretched like the heavens – without columns, vaulted and closed...Its high dome is comparable to the heaven of heavens...Its great, splendid arches represent the four sides of the world…*".[95]

Considering the connections made earlier in this chapter between Cosmas" *Topography* and the topographical corpus/Madaba Map, it is significant that this hymn describes a model of the world so similar to the model described by Cosmas Indicopleustes. This connection suggests that the concept was well-known in the period in which our assemblage was produced, and thus further indicates that it is how we should interpret a layer of the meaning shared by the mosaics in our assemblage. The concept of the microcosm of the earth within the church can also be related specifically to the Madaba Map. In Graeco-Roman Antiquity, the earth was conceived of as the centre of the seas, with the airs around it. During the Byzantine period, this ancient view assumed a Christian character. It was now the Sky of Heaven, surrounded by air and water, and beneath it, the *oikoumene*, with a Christian centre, Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem is depicted at the centre of the Madaba Map, which might further support the interpretation that this mosaic was meant to symbolise the entire inhabited earth, according to the Christian concept of the *oikoumene*.[96]

In contrast to the concept discussed above that might explain one layer of the meaning of both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, is the possibility that ecclesiastical politics are at play in some mosaics of our assemblage. The topographical mosaic border in the Church on the Acropolis can be interpreted as communicating something of contemporary ecclesiastical politics. This mosaic preserves depictions of cities that are very similar to the list of 25 bishoprics or archdioceses in the Latin text, *Notitia Antiochae ac Ierosolymae Patriarchatuum*

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[95] *The Cathedral of Edessa*, p.58, 4-7.
[96] Donceel-Voûte, p.521.

and in Greek, the *Tacticon* of Jerusalem in a work by Nilos Doxapatris.[97] The mosaic in the Church on the Acropolis is datable to the eighth century and unfortunately, there is very little information on the ecclesiastical organisation of Palestine and *Provincia Arabia* between the Synod of Jerusalem in 536 and the beginning of the Crusades, which might verify the information possibly provided by the mosaic. Therefore, the suggestion that this mosaic communicates something of contemporary ecclesiastical politics must be handled cautiously. If this mosaic intended to depict bishoprics though, it is odd that Nicopolis, Areopolis, Esbus, and Beelmeon are depicted when they are not reflected in the lists of autocephalous bishoprics. This disparity might disprove de Vaux"s theory, but he responded to this problem with the suggestion that the disparity reflected the ecclesiastical changes in this period.[98]

De Vaux"s theory was that the topographical border represented bishoprics specifically under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Jerusalem. However, Beelmeon and Esbus were under the patriarchate of Antioch, not Jerusalem. As late as 570, according to the *Notitia Antiochena*, Esbus and Madaba (both near the church containing this mosaic at Ma,in) were under the metropolitan of Bostra, which was under the patriarchate of Antioch. Moreover, Jerusalem itself is not depicted in the mosaic, but perhaps only because this panel was one of those destroyed.[99] De Vaux responded to these facts with the suggestion that some bishoprics under Antioch were possibly transferred to Jerusalem by the time that this mosaic was produced, but ultimately, this theory is unverifiable. Nevertheless, de Vaux maintained that the collection of towns depicted in the mosaic in the Church on the Acropolis represented a group of bishoprics under a single ecclesiastical authority.[100] Ultimately, the evidence suggests that the meaning of this mosaic *is* related to contemporary ecclesiastical politics, if not in the manner suggested by de Vaux. It might be a more accurate interpretation to say that this mosaic depicts bishoprics and towns under the ecclesiastical

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[97] de Vaux, pp.251-252.
[98] ibid., p.253.
[99] ibid., p.251.
[100] ibid., pp.253-255.

authority of Antioch, not Jerusalem, as this is the conclusion that the evidence more strongly supports.

Donceel-Voûte suggested that ecclesiastical politics are at play in the Madaba Map. The feature of the Madaba Map that suggests this interpretation is the large central vignette of Jerusalem and the issues concerned with the creation of the patriarchate of Jerusalem. The creation of the patriarchate of Jerusalem was confirmed at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 and had very much become a reality by the time of the second Council of Constantinople in 553.[101] At this time, Jerusalem became a patriarchate of equal status to Antioch. Donceel-Voûte suggested that it was against this background that Antiochene iconography was transferred to the iconography of Jerusalem.[102] At the time of the production of the Madaba Map, Madaba, like the rest of *Provincia Arabia*, was under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Antioch.[103] As such, does the prominence attributed to the city of Jerusalem in the Madaba Map indicate that the patron was pledging their allegiance to the patriarchate of Jerusalem?[104] There is not the evidence to confidently propose this, and the evidence indicates instead that the prominence given to Jerusalem in the Madaba Map was more related to the theological concept that Jerusalem was the centre of the *oikoumene.* This concept is connected with the idea of the microcosm of the earth and further supports that this concept was one layer of the shared meaning between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map.

L.A. Hunt‟s proposal that town pride lay behind the cityscapes in the church mosaic pavements of *Provincia Arabia*[105] supports the idea that the whole assemblage was less about spiritual matters and more about earthly concerns. The personified version of the topographical theme, rather than the architectonic that we have dealt with in this thesis, and as seen in the Hippolytus Hall, shows

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[101] Donceel-Voûte, p.535.
Frederick W. Norris, „Palestine‟, in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. by Ferguson, pp.856-858, (p.857).
[102] Donceel-Voûte, p.536.
[103] L. Hunt, p.14.
[104] Donceel-Voûte, p.539.
[105] L. Hunt, p.13-14.

christianised versions of Rome and Madaba located beside each other. Hunt suggested that this placement indicated the civic pride of the people of Madaba through aligning their town with Rome, and even a degree of competition with that city.[106] Likewise, she suggested that the inclusion of Egyptian walled cities in the church mosaics of *Provincia Arabia*, particularly in the Churches of Saint John the Baptist and Saints Peter and Paul at Gerasa, was an attempt to connect their town with the great cities of Antiquity. She suggested that the cities of Egypt implied civilisation and thus the aspirations of the towns of *Provincia Arabia*.

Egypt was also depicted in the Madaba Map,[107] as the mosaic was primarily intended as an overview of the Christian Holy Land. However, the fact that Egypt is depicted in both the Madaba Map and at Gerasa does not provide much similarity between the mosaics, because the composition and context of the depiction is entirely different. There was a connection between Egypt and *Provincia Arabia* in that Egypt was the only other land that Christ visited during his lifetime. Both regions were visited by pilgrims, but this interpretation fits only into the context of the Madaba Map, as the Map depicts the entire Holy Land visited by pilgrims, and the Gerasa mosaics only depict Egyptian cityscapes. Therefore, the depictions of Egypt at Gerasa are about the civic aspirations of that town, whereas, in the Madaba Map, the depictions of Egypt are part of the intent to display the entire Christian Holy Land.

The proximity of Madaba and Jerusalem in the Madaba Map might also reflect civic pride and the Madabene sense of competition with the Holy centre of the world.[108] Jerusalem in the Madaba Map has to its west, still within the central axis, an area that must have included Madaba, but unfortunately, this part is no longer extant.[109] This alignment of Madaba with Jerusalem suggests that their town was being elevated to the level of the Holy centre of the world. The depiction of Madaba was probably also located at the point of the main access to the sanctuary, which would have been an effective piece of propaganda for this

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[106] ibid., p.13.
[107] ibid., p.13.
[108] Edward D. Hunt, „Holy Land Itineraries: Mapping the Bible in Late Roman Palestine", in *Space in the Roman World,* ed. by Talbert and Brodersen, pp.97-110, (p.99).
[109] Donceel-Voûte, p.523.

episcopal see. Moreover, the topographical relationship between Madaba and Jerusalem in the Map, as well as the location of the city of Madaba in the Madaba Map, was intended to exalt their city in the Christian cosmographical system. This idea of competition, propaganda, and civic pride contrasts with (but does not exclude) the possibility that the vignette is about allegiance to the patriarchate of Jerusalem, or the concept of the microcosm of the earth, both discussed above.

There is a layer of meaning in the Jerusalem panel in the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen that is shared with the Madaba Map. The order of the Saint Stephen topographical mosaic is basically geographical, with the southwest to the northwest depicted on one side, and the southeast to the northeast depicted on the other side of the Jordan. The factor that renders the Saint Stephen mosaic similar to the Madaba Map is that its depiction of Jerusalem is made the head of the set, in immediate proximity to the rostrum sanctuary before the left pillar. Symmetrically, before the right pillar and at the same height, is the depiction of Kastron Mefaa. Therefore, it seems that this rural borough in *Provincia Arabia* was being represented as the equal of the city of Jerusalem. Similarly, the city of Madaba in the Madaba Map was located on the central axis alongside the Jerusalem vignette.

Therefore, both the Saint Stephen mosaic and the Madaba Map share a layer of meaning in that they both utilise a compositional proximity between their town and Jerusalem to send a message about the civic pride and aspirations of their town. This interpretation is not even entirely „earthly", as an association between their town and the centre of the Christian *oikoumene* must carry an assertion about the place of their town in the Christian cosmographical scheme. Nevertheless, the context and content of the Madaba Map is the entire *oikoumene*, whereas no such context is provided in the Church of Saint Stephen.[110] Therefore, the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen and the Madaba Map share this layer of meaning created by the compositional relationship between their town and Jerusalem. However, the variation of composition, content, and context beyond the presence of this city and its compositional relationship with their town,

[110] ibid., pp.523-524.

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creates a layer of unique meaning, particular to the Madaba Map alone, as discussed next.

The discussion so far has focused on the layers of meaning shared by the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. However, the composition and content of the Madaba Map is drastically different to any mosaic in the topographical corpus, even that mosaic (in the Church of Saint Stephen) that also features a depiction of Jerusalem. It is considered in this thesis that such a drastically different form and content must communicate at least some layer of meaning different to the topographical corpus. Therefore, the next part of this section focuses on the layer of meaning specific to the Madaba Map. The unique layer of the Madaba Map's meaning can be ascertained through the nature of the Jerusalem vignette, particularly because this vignette is highly conspicuous and central to the entire composition. Kühnel suggested that the position of the Madaba Map in the church, the location of Jerusalem in the Madaba Map, and the position of the Holy Sepulchre in the Jerusalem vignette symbolises the "heavenly, New, Christian Jerusalem *through* Jerusalem on earth". Moreover, the mosaicist altered the actual location of the Holy Sepulchre and located it instead in the middle of the vignette.[111] Therefore, this layer of meaning is specific to the composition of the Madaba Map and communicates the idea of Jerusalem as the centre of the *oikoumene*, with a Christian church at *its* centre.

The unique layers of the Madaba Map's meaning can be further explored by examining its location. Why did the patron of the Map choose to make his offering to a church in the remote town of Madaba? Why not choose a church in Jerusalem instead?[112] Clermont-Ganneau responded to these questions with the suggestion that the actual topographical position of the town of Madaba was relevant. The town was located close to Mount Nebo - a region that evoked the memory of Moses. It was in the immediate environs of this area that Moses received the command from Jehovah to ascend to the top of Pisgah and view the

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[111] Kühnel, pp.90-91.
[112] Clermont-Ganneau, p.243.

entire Promised Land.[113] This connection explains why a donor would commission the vision experienced by Moses in the town neighbouring the Biblical event.[114] However, if this was the case, it is interesting that the donor did not choose to commission a mosaic map for a church in Mount Nebo itself. A potential solution to this problem is that the donor was from Madaba or had a personal connection to it and/or this particular church in Madaba. Moreover, although Mount Nebo was a *locus sanctus* and Madaba was not, Madaba had a larger Christian community and was more easily accessible than Mount Nebo.[115] Nevertheless, Mount Nebo was home to numerous sanctuaries, including one dedicated to the memory of Moses" last moments of life.[116] Therefore, it may be prudent to return to the less flawed possibility that the patron chose Madaba because of a personal connection to that town and/or because of the more earthly concern, that *it* was the episcopal see, not Mount Nebo.

We should question next why Moses" vision of the Promised Land was deemed the best subject matter for the mosaic in the Church of the Map at all. The answer can be found in the fact that, as early as Eusebius, Moses was a strong presence in the region and this influence continued into the sixth century. An example of Moses" influence in the Byzantine period can be demonstrated by the fact that Eusebius used the model of the Moses of the Rod, who led his people out of Egypt and to the Promised Land, to represent Constantine in his *Vita Constantini*.[117] Therefore, it is demonstrable that Moses" vision was chosen as subject matter for a church mosaic in Madaba because of Moses" prevailing influence and the relationship between him and Mount Nebo, which was in vicinity of Madaba. But then why was Moses" vision depicted in this unique, large-scale cartographical form? Clermont-Ganneau"s answer was that the artist

[113] Thümmel, p.67.
[114] Clermont-Ganneau, p.243.
Adolf Jacoby, „Das geographische Mosaik von Madaba, die älteste Karte des Heiligen Landes", in *Studien über christliche Denkmäler*. N.F. 3, (Leipzig: Dieterich (T. Weicher), 1905), p.28.
[115] Shahîd, *Map Revisited*, p.148.
Egeria, *(Itinerarium Egeriae) Egeria's Travels,* trans. by John Wilkinson, (London: S.P.C.K, 1971), p.106, 11.3-4.
[116] Michele Piccirillo, „New Discoveries on Mount Nebo", *ADAJ*, 21 (1976), 55-59, (p.55).
[117] Eusebius, *Life of Constantine,* introduction, trans. and commentary by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), pp.21-22, pp.34-39, Books 1.38, 1.12, 1.20, 2.12.1, 1.39, 1.39.1, II.6.2-9.2.

attempted to depict what Moses actually saw in that vision.[118] However, this point does not take into account that the patrons and artists/craftsmen of *Provincia Arabia* came into contact with cartographical traditions of Roman Antiquity, as discussed in chapters one and two. It is extremely unlikely that without these traditions and sources, it would have been such a „logical" step for the patron to decide to depict Moses" vision of the Promised Land in a cartographical composition. The composition could just as easily have been rendered as the more common landscape with no cartographical features.

Therefore, there must be a specific reason for depicting Moses" vision in cartographical form. The reason can be attributed to the sixth-century Byzantine pre-occupation with Moses again, particularly the concept of Moses as Cosmographer,[119] as well as Cosmas Indicopleustes" attempts to give a cartographical form to the Christian *oikoumene*. Therefore, this thesis has demonstrated that a number of factors converged in sixth-century *Provincia Arabia* to create the cartographical composition of the Madaba Map: the influence of Cosmas" *Topography,* the contact that the patrons of the Ma‚in mosaic, Saint Stephen mosaic, and Madaba Map appear to have had with the Roman itinerary tradition (and perhaps occurring and having influence at this time because of the pre-existing influence of Cosmas and the concept of Moses as Cosmographer), the influence and contact with the topographical concept, motifs, and compositions from North Africa, Syria, and Palestine, (again, perhaps having an effect at this time because of the other factors discussed here) and finally, a sense of civic pride in their town and a desire to pray for its continued prosperity. We might suggest then: what better way to focus these prayers than an actual depiction of the town or church?

The major issue in this section relates back to the analysis in previous chapters about the different compositions that architectonic topographical motifs are found in. If the iconography takes a different composition, some layers of meaning change. There is the most general level of conceptual relationship

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[118] Clermont-Ganneau, p.244.
[119] Shahîd, *Map Revisited*, p.153.

between the architectonic depictions in the topographical corpus/Madaba Map and the personifications of Earth and earth-related motifs, such as the sea and the toil of the locals, found in numerous church mosaics in *Provincia Arabia*. There is a general conceptual relationship between these motifs and the architectonic depictions because both represent aspects of God‛s earth in the microcosm of the earth that is the church. The more complex layer of meaning relates the topographical corpus specifically to the Madaba Map, and both focus those who enter the church on a prayer for the continued prosperity of the town, using actual representations of the church or town itself, combined with the propitious motifs of nilotic iconography. The Ma‛in mosaic and Madaba Map may also communicate something of the ecclesiastical politics of the time. Moreover, to varying degrees, the mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map also communicate civic pride, although the manner in which this was achieved in the Saint Stephen mosaic and the Madaba Map is unique within our assemblage. The Madaba Map‛s more profound layers of meaning are connected with Moses‛ vision of the Promised Land and are therefore unrelated to the topographical corpus.

Conclusions

Chapter three began with a discussion of the economic, ecclesiastical, and literary background of *Provincia Arabia*. This survey later informed the analysis of the meaning of the mosaics in our assemblage, as there are economic, ecclesiastical, and literary-based layers to that meaning. This background also contextualised the discussion of the relationship between the functions of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. This section demonstrated that although both the corpus and the Map had a tendency to be located in a central or at least conspicuous position in the church, only the Madaba Map can be connected with a liturgical function. This section outlined the scope of function in relation to the topographical corpus and the Map, and was followed by discussions of two particularly large questions of meaning, the first also connected to the previous discussion of function. The first issue was whether the corpus and the Map had a particular function and significance to the Chalcedonian or Monophysite communities of *Provincia Arabia*. Nothing could be verified, but there were interesting implications about the presence of

Monophysitism in *Provincia Arabia* in our period, although no particular towns could be isolated. As such, no divergence between the corpus and Map in this regard could be concluded either. The second of these issues was the frequent combination of nilotic and topographical themes in both the topographical corpus and the Map, and in terms of the meaning of the combination of these motifs, the mosaics could be categorised together. Ultimately, in terms of the literary influence of Cosmas Indicopleustes, architectural position in the church, the combination of nilotic and topographical themes, and to a general extent, meaning, the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map can be categorised together. However, the specific content of the Madaba Map, related to salvation and Moses" vision of the Promised Land, denotes a higher level of function and meaning in the Madaba Map that is distinct from the topographical corpus.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis has been to interpret the nature of the relationship between the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map. It was considered that three areas best allowed this relationship to be explained: origins, date and provenance, and function and meaning. The chapters of this thesis have reflected that division. The task of explaining this relationship was undertaken because of the strong stylistic and motif similarities between the mosaics, as well as their shared geographical and chronological parameters. Despite these criteria, which make it clear that there *is* a relationship between the mosaics to be explained, the composition of the Madaba Map is entirely unique in our assemblage. It is a detailed map of the Holy Land and a symbolic depiction of the entire Christian *oikoumene*. Although there is compositional variation in the topographical corpus alone, the Madaba Map's composition is the only one of the assemblage that can be called 'cartographical' according to the definition given in the Introduction.[1] This compositional divergence between the corpus and the Madaba Map, related on the basis of the above criteria, prompted an in-depth analysis of *how* and *why* the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map are related. It is the first two chapters on origins and date and provenance that explained aspects of *how* the mosaics are related. The final chapter on function and meaning then explained *why*.

Chapter one dealt with the extent to which the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map share origins, both in terms of motifs and composition. The thesis began with this chapter because it deals with *how* the mosaics are related, and provided a solid foundation for the discussion of other issues of *how*, covered in chapter two. The first part of this chapter discussed the extent to which the origins of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map converge. This part involved a discussion of the topographical motifs found in our entire assemblage, including the Hellenistic polygonal walled-city motif and its adaptations, and other architectonic topographical motifs, such as the isolated buildings in the mosaic in the Church of Saints Lot and Procopius. It was interpreted that just as all mosaics of our assemblage share the same range of motifs, they also share the same

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[1] Introduction, pp.1-5.

origins and prototypes of these motifs. The issue of prototypes later came to bear upon chapter two, where it was discussed *how* these prototypes actually came into contact with the patrons and artists/craftsmen of *Provincia Arabia*. The second part of chapter one discussed the extent to which the prototypes of the topographical corpus and the Map diverge, and it was found that the divergence between the corpus and the Map was in terms of *compositional* prototypes.

There is significant compositional variation even within the topographical corpus, and so the discussion of the range of compositions in the assemblage focused on the degree of cartographical composition present in the mosaics. The following analysis of the compositional prototypes based on cartographical sources from Antiquity then found that, although the artists/craftsmen of the Saint Stephen mosaic, Ma'in mosaic, and Madaba Map used visual itineraries as a compositional source, only the Madaba Map used a visual itinerary *in map form* as a source. Therefore, the Madaba Map's composition as a finished product remains unique in the assemblage, but it still shares a close relationship with the Ma'in and Saint Stephen mosaics in terms of the use of visual itineraries as a compositional prototype. Ultimately, if we only look at the motifs of the corpus and the Madaba Map, there is very little divergence between the mosaics; they all become simply one corpus of topographical mosaics. Compositionally, the two eighth-century mosaics in the Church of Saint Stephen and the Church on the Acropolis and the Madaba Map are most related to each other within the entire assemblage. However, this is only in terms of their compositional origins coming from closely related traditions within the category of the Roman visual itinerary. The compositions of the finished products diverge considerably. It is this compositional variation, even within the topographical corpus, but particularly pronounced between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map that was re-addressed in chapter three for its repercussions on the function and meaning of the mosaics.

Chapter two picked up the issue of origins from chapter one and explained *how* these origins came to affect the artists/craftsmen and patrons of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map. This discussion involved exploration of both the routes of the motifs and concepts in the mosaics into *Provincia Arabia*, as well as

the transmission modes of these elements to the mosaic patrons, and into the mosaic workshops of the province. The route of the iconographies into *Provincia Arabia* is firmly connected to the broader issue of provenance. As such, this analysis had to be contextualised first by verifications of the dating and provenance criteria for the relationship between the mosaics. The verification of the provenance criteria involved discussion of the geographical distribution of the mosaics. This survey then contextualised the analysis of the distribution and nature of the mosaic workshops in *Provincia Arabia*. This latter discussion demonstrated that, just as one of the criteria for analysing a relationship between the corpus and the Map was their shared provenance (broadly, *Provincia Arabia*), they were therefore able to be categorised together in this section as well.

Similarly, both the corpus and the Map were able to be categorised together in the discussion of the routes into *Provincia Arabia* that the motifs and themes of topographical/cartographical iconography took. The only area here where we must speak of the Madaba Map separately, is in terms of the cartographical compositional sources used by the patron and artist/craftsman, and in this regard, the Ma'in and Saint Stephen mosaics were categorised with the Madaba Map. The discussion of the transmission *modes* follows that on the transmission *routes*, as these arguments support each other and are closely related. This section on the transmission modes dealt with motifs, rather than composition, so again, the topographical corpus and Madaba Map could be categorised together. Chapter two ended with an analysis of the implications of the provenance of the entire assemblage. In essence, did these mosaics display an artistic character that belonged to *Provincia Arabia*, or to the Byzantine capital of Constantinople, or another metropolitan centre of the Byzantine Empire? This discussion demonstrated that both the topographical corpus and Madaba Map are characteristically Byzantine-period Arabian in style and intent. Ultimately, this chapter elaborated on the shared date and provenance of the corpus and the Map, and therefore, the mosaics could be categorised together for most of this chapter, except where any issue of composition and its resonances emerged.

Just as chapter two ended with the introduction of the intent of the topographical corpus and the Map, chapter three picked up this theme and elaborated on it.

Chapter three was dedicated to an exploration of, principally, the meaning of the mosaics, but also, to a lesser extent, their function. This chapter dealt with *why* the topographical corpus and Madaba Map belonged to sixth to eighth-century *Provincia Arabia*, and as such, it used the analysis and information of chapters one and two to contextualise the analysis. In chapter three, the economic, ecclesiastical, and literary background provided three factors that shaped the meaning of the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map, and the implications of these areas were elaborated on particularly at the end of this chapter. Throughout the first two chapters, it was shown that the major element that divided the topographical corpus from the Madaba Map was composition. In chapter three, we studied the implications of this division for the function and meaning of the mosaics. It was also in chapter three, particularly in the discussion of function that we addressed that the unique composition of the Madaba Map is owed not only to a visual itinerary in map form having been a source, but also that the scope of this composition and the subject matter it facilitates, communicates the story of human salvation. In the discussion of function, the focus was on how the architectural context and position of the mosaic in the church affects how we can interpret its function. Most of the assemblage was found in a central or at least conspicuous position in the church, from the point of view of both priest and congregation. However, only the Madaba Map was found in both a central position *and* contained subject matter relevant to the liturgy, that is, the story of human salvation.[2] Therefore, the Madaba Map's composition indicates that it had a different function from the topographical corpus.

Before the final discussion of the shared and different layers of meaning in the topographical corpus and the Map, two specific areas of meaning were addressed. The first was whether the assemblage could be attributed to Chalcedonian or Monophysite communities in *Provincia Arabia* and whether there was any divergence between the corpus and the Map regarding this issue. Neither composition nor subject matter allowed this question to be answered, so the topographical corpus and Madaba Map had to be categorised together in this analysis. There were some interesting possibilities suggested by this discussion

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[2] Shahîd, *Map Revisited*, p.152.

that might even mean that communities containing churches with topographical mosaics were Monophysite. However, no one community could be identified. This chapter also concentrated on the meaning of the combination of nilotic and topographical motifs in both the corpus and the Map. The idea that nilotic symbols were meant to constitute a prayer for the continued prosperity of the Nile[3] could have been adopted by Arabian patrons and artists/craftsmen and applied as a prayer for the prosperity, no longer of the Nile, but of their own town or church. The only exception to this interpretation might be the earliest extant mosaics of the assemblage at Gerasa, which combine nilotic landscape motifs with nilotic cities, and no reference to their own actual church or town. The economic prosperity of *Provincia Arabia* in our period, and discussed in the opening of this chapter, supports this interpretation of the combination of nilotic and topographical motifs. In addition, the architectonic topographical motifs in both the corpus and the Map were also intended to focus the congregation on prayers for the town and were propitious symbols themselves. Therefore, the combination of two propitious symbols would have amplified the intent.

At the most basic level, the topographical mosaics of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map share the underlying concept that the church is a microcosm of the earth. All architectonic topographical motifs as well as other motifs symbolising aspects of the earth share this layer of meaning. Secondly, depictions of the church and/or the town of the mosaic patron constitute a propitious symbol and a prayer for the continued prosperity of the town. This layer of meaning is connected to motifs, not composition, which means that the Madaba Map shares this meaning. However, the complex composition of the Madaba Map and its implications, suggests that this was not a primary purpose of the Map, although this meaning *is* present. Individual mosaics of the topographical corpus may also share more complex layers of meaning with the Madaba Map. For example, both the Ma'in mosaic and the Map may communicate something of the ecclesiastical politics of the time. Moreover, the aligned depictions of Jerusalem and the town of the patron in the mosaic in the Church of Saint Stephen and the Madaba Map suggest the civic pride and aspirations of these towns, perhaps with

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[3] Maguire, *Rivers of Paradise*, p.181.

propagandistic purpose, or, with the more spiritual concern of assuring the congregation and town of their place in the Christian *oikoumene*. Ultimately, all mosaics of the topographical corpus can be said to communicate this layer of meaning about civic pride. However, no other mosaic of the assemblage achieves this in the manner found in the Saint Stephen mosaic or the Madaba Map.

There is also the layer of meaning unique to the Madaba Map. It is only this mosaic, with its composition and the subject matter its scope facilitates, that communicates the concept of Moses' vision of the Promised Land and the story of human salvation. However, this section also intended to explain *why* this composition and subject matter had been chosen. In essence, the Madaba Map takes its unique cartographical form because of its location near an area specific to Moses, but also because of the sixth-century pre-occupation with the concept of Moses as Cosmographer. The fact that the second half of the sixth century was the period in which Cosmas Indicopleustes' *Christian Topography* appeared also probably prompted the patron of the Madaba Map to think of a cartographical composition for this depiction of the Holy Land. These factors, in combination with influences from the topographical mosaics of North Africa, Palestine, and Syria, and contact with the cartographical sources of Roman Antiquity, both explain the subject matter and composition of the Map. Ultimately, it is the differences between these layers of meaning that separate the topographical corpus from the Map. However, both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map share the most basic layer of meaning and, as indicated above, there are even some varying layers of meaning between mosaics of the topographical corpus alone. We need to be clear that the mosaics of the topographical corpus and the Map communicate more than a single message. The patrons were influenced by numerous stimuli that prompted them to commission these mosaics and the mosaics reflect these stimuli in their layers of meaning.

Ultimately then, to what extent are the topographical corpus of *Provincia Arabia* and the Madaba Map related and what is the nature of that relationship? In terms of origins, two eighth-century mosaics of the topographical corpus (at Umm al-Rasas and Ma'in) are related to the same category of cartographical compositional source as the Madaba Map. Moreover, all of the topographical

corpus and the Madaba Map share the same individual motifs: walled cities, other architectonic topographical motifs, and nilotic elements. Both the corpus and the Map combine nilotic and topographical motifs, and thus share the meaning that resonates from this combination to varying extents, depending on the form of the combination and composition it is placed into. The *composition* of the Madaba Map remains unique in the province, as in its original form, it was a large-scale cartographical depiction of the entire Holy Land.[4] The topographical corpus and the Map also share the same dating and provenance parameters and can therefore be categorised together in this regard. These areas also do not involve much discussion of composition, which further explains why the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map is close in terms of dating and provenance.

Function presents another area in which the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map diverge, but this is again related to composition and the subject matter that the composition of the Madaba Map facilitates. Both the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map display a tendency towards central location in the church, which implies that the mosaics were all meant to be a focal point for the congregation and, only in the case of the Madaba Map, possibly also for the liturgy. The topographical corpus also shares basic layers of meaning with the Madaba Map, such as the concept of the microcosm of the earth and civic pride. Moreover, individual mosaics of the topographical corpus share other layers of meaning with the Madaba Map, such as the Ma'in mosaic and the Saint Stephen mosaic. Therefore, in all categories - origins, date and provenance, and function and meaning - the relationship between the topographical corpus and the Madaba Map is close in terms of the quantity of issues considered in this thesis. It is ultimately only the composition of the Madaba Map and the layers of meaning this composition convey that separates it from the topographical corpus. The same argument could also be made for every mosaic of the topographical corpus which displays significant compositional variation. In terms of quantity of issues, compositional variation is a small difference, but when we ask what compositional variation actually communicates about the meaning of these

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[4] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*, p.27.

mosaics, it shows how greatly the Madaba Map diverges from the topographical corpus. Therefore, the relationship between the corpus and the Map is extremely close in terms of motif origins, date, provenance, and basic layers of meaning. However, in terms of compositional origins, the subject matter this composition facilitates, and therefore, the meaning, as created by this composition and subject matter, the Madaba Map stands as a highly-distinct artefact, largely separated from the topographical corpus in message and purpose.