

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

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ABSTRACT

The topographical church floor mosaics of *Provincia Arabia*, dated between the sixth and eighth centuries, have a close but complex relationship with the late sixth or early seventh-century cartographical mosaic in the Church of the Map in Madaba. The corpus of ten topographical mosaics considered in this thesis has a relationship with the Madaba Mosaic Map in three areas: artistic origins, date and provenance, and function and meaning. The nature of this relationship has not been fully considered in Byzantine scholarship and as such, the intention of this thesis is to fill that gap in scholarship.

An investigation of the artistic origins involves breaking the topographical and cartographical iconographies down into their composite parts: motifs and composition, and then analysing the development of these components. Issues of dating and provenance demonstrate the extent to which the relationship between the topographical corpus and Madaba Map is very close, and ultimately, these discussions of origins, date, and provenance prepare the background for the analysis of the most complex aspects of the relationship. These aspects predominantly involve the extent to which the topographical corpus and Madaba Map communicate the same meaning and to a lesser extent, share the same functions. These three major areas are investigated in order to answer the broader question about the nature of the relationship between the set of topographical mosaics and the cartographical mosaic, divided mainly by compositional variation. This compositional variation resonates in other aspects of the relationship and is also responsible for disparity of function and meaning.

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