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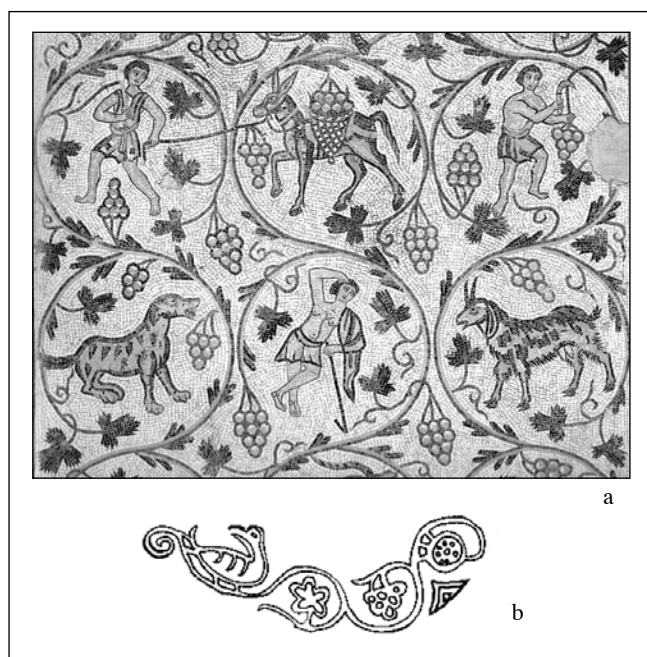
The Inhabited Vine Motif and Mould-Made Lamps: A Continuing Tradition in the Early Islamic Period

I would like to dedicate this paper to the Franciscan scholars who have brought to light and published a large number of Christian sites in Palestine and Transjordan: Virgilio Corbo, who excavated at Capernaum, Herodion, Mount of Olives, and Holy Sepulchre, Bellarmino Bagatti at the Tomb of the Virgin Mary in Gethsemane, Nazareth, and the Church of the Circumcision, Sylvester Saller at Dominus Flevit, Bethphage, Mount Nebo, Bethany, Khirbat al-Mukhayyat, and 'Ayn Karim, Hilary Schneider, Eugenio Alliata, Marian Arndt, Stanislaw Loffreda for their work on the pottery, lamps, and inscriptions, and Michele Piccirillo for excavations at Mādabā, Mount Nebo, Mā'in, Mukhayyat, and Umm ar-Raṣāṣ. Their incomparable contribution to archaeology and art history provides the basis for both my research on the decorative motif of the inhabited vine and the publication of a corpus of early Islamic lamps and pottery from Building 600 at Tall Jāwā, near al-Yādūda.

Introduction

The inhabited vine is a decorative motif that consists of a vine with tendrils forming circles or medallions that surround figures and floral images.¹ While the figures may be human, animal, fish or fowl, the floral elements are usually those directly associated with the vine itself, such as grape clusters and grape leaves. Other elements include flowers, pomegranates, or other fruit. The vine and its

tendrils can also serve as a connecting element, linking together an elaborate scene that includes agricultural² or hunting activities.³ In Jordan in the late Byzantine period, this motif appears on mosaic floors in the form of parallel vine scrolls which constitute the central element in a carpet. The design is also used in borders and between columns (FIG. 1a).



1a. Mosaic scroll (after Piccirillo 1993: fig. 253, published here with permission of the author; b) scroll on a ceramic lamp from Tall Jāwā (V1614; D23/15.35).

¹ For the history of the term, see Dauphin (1987:183, n.1).

² The most popular agricultural scene is that of the grape harvest and processing. This motif had a long history, appearing already during the New Kingdom in Egypt in the Tomb of Nakht (Bongioanni 2004: 185) and the tomb of Neberhabet, first prophet of the Ka (Magi 1990: 82). In the Late Antique period, the vine harvest scene appears on mosaic floors in Jordan at the Church of the Deacon Thomas at 'Uyūn Mūsā (Piccirillo 1993: figs. 252–256,

263) and the Church of the Holy Martyrs Lot and Procopius at Mukhayyat (1993: figs. 202, 213, 214). It is also known in Egypt in a long relief on a frieze (2.87m) from Oxyrhynchus (?) dating to the 4th/5th century (Nos. 7960, 7962–7965; Gabra and Eaton-Krauss 2007: pl. 68).

³ Hunting scenes also appear on floors in Jordan, for example in the Basilica of Moses on Mount Nebo (Piccirillo 1993: fig. 166).

A miniature version of this motif is the most common design found on mould-made lamps (FIG. 1b) from the sites of Tall Jāwā, south of ‘Ammān (Daviau and Beckman 2001), and the Probatika in Jerusalem (Arndt 1987). The close association of this design with the use of the inhabited vine on mosaic floors in central Jordan suggests that the Madaba school of craftsmen and their pattern repertoire may have influenced the designs on the lamps. The motif also appears on the walls of the entrance hall of the Umayyad palace at ‘Ammān, while a more elaborate version covers the façade of Qaṣr al-Mushatta, an unfinished Umayyad palace to the east of Mādabā. This paper will discuss this motif and its distribution in Jordan and Palestine and the continuity of this design in the early Islamic artistic repertoire.

History and Distribution of the Inhabited Vine Motif

The “inhabited vine” is a variant of the grape vine motif which had an extensive geographical distribution and a long history. In New Kingdom Egypt, the vine makes its appearance in the Tomb of Sennefer, the mayor of the City under Amenhotep II; here the vine motif covers a large section of the ceiling. Along with scenes of grape treading (see note 2), women are shown on the walls of the Tomb of Nakht holding grape vines (Bongioanni 2004:185, 166). The motif was also used extensively in the Hellenistic period (Avi-Yonah 1948:149),⁴ and is seen in Roman period art throughout Jordan and Palestine. It appears as an ornament carved on capitals at the Nabataean site of Bayḍa (Bikai *et al.* 2007), on stone sarcophagi, such as the lid of sarcophagus No. 1 from Dominus Flevit in Jerusalem (Avi-Yonah 1961: pl. II:2), and engraved on 4th century lead coffins at Beth She‘arim (Avigad 1971:173–182). The vine also appears painted on the walls of burial caves, such as the one on the Mount of Olives (Bagatti 1974: figs. 3–8) and in Chamber A of the Goliath Family Tomb at Jeri-

cho (Hachlili and Killebrew 1999: pl. V.1). That this motif was known throughout the late Roman world can be seen on a “door-post and lintel” at Khirbat al-Beida in Syria (Bell 1987: 125, 129),⁵ on a pavement in the basilica at Sabratha in Libya (Darmon 1995: fig. 25), on a wall mosaic in an arcosolium in Naples (Bellucci 1932: fig. 5),⁶ on a pavement in Valence-sur-Baïse in the Aquitaine region (Balmelle 1994: fig. 3), and on the exterior of the Visigothic church at Quintanilla de las Viñas near Burgos in Spain (www).⁷ In Egypt, the vine continues to be used during the 3rd–4th century A.D. on limestone reliefs from Heracleopolis Magna, either as a frame on one side and across the top of a scene (No. 7041), or as a vine scroll forming an arch above human figures (No. 7058, Coptic Museum, Cairo, personal observation). Of special interest is the relief on a pillar from the 6th century monastery of St. Jeremiah at Saqqara which depicts a vine sprouting from an amphora with grape clusters alternating with grape leaves (Coptic Museum, personal observation), as well as a capital with large medallions formed by a vine which encircles both leaves and clusters (Gabra and Eaton-Krauss 2007: pl. 41).

In small works of art, the wide distribution of the vine motif is demonstrated by its presence on artefacts of various types, including Roman period lamps from Israel (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978: 578, 579) and Jordan (Khirbat al-Mudayna [Thamad]; Daviau *et al.* 2000: fig. 7:8), the exterior of the Antioch chalice (Painter 1977b: ill.147), and a Sassanian silver goblet from Iran (Painter 1977a: ill. 323).⁸ A vine heavy with grape clusters decorates the shoulder of an Egyptian wine jug (8972) of unknown provenience (Gabra and Eaton-Krauss 2007: pl. 126), which is tentatively dated to the 4th–5th centuries A.D. Several lamps, one from Egypt (2834) dated to the 3rd–4th centuries and one from North Africa, assigned to the 5th century, serve as examples of mould-made lamps with a vine motif on the shoulder (Gabra and Eaton-Krauss 2007: pl.

⁴ The motifs of a grape cluster, pomegranates, and birds also appear on a Neo-Punic Tanit stela (BM 125102) dating to the 1st century BC (Barnett 1989:7*–8*; ill. 7).

⁵ Bell (1987:126) suggested that this fort was first a Roman fort and later a Ghassanid fortress. The vine scrolls are seen in her photograph, which she made on site (University of Newcastle-on-Tyne, Gertrude Bell Archive, photos B 063–065 for the year 1905, <http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/>).

⁶ Cited in Foerster 1990: 548; fig. 4; n. 17).

⁷ Also in the early Roman period, a single inhabited vine appears

on a relief at the Nabataean site of Khirbat adh-Dhariḥ (el-Khourī 2007: fig. 8b), as well as on a stone beam from the Temple of Bel in Palmyra, where the vine runs horizontally below a row of Palmyrene deities (Browning 1979: fig. 8). The vine motif is also found on a frieze from the Fayum(?) dating to the 6th/7th century; here it consists of a single scroll with grape leaves and clusters above a row of animals each encircled with acanthus leaves (Gabra and Eaton-Krauss 2007: pl. 69).

⁸ I am grateful to Martin Beckmann for the last two references.

128; Bickel *et al.* 2007: fig. 63). The motif also appears as a Eucharistic motif in association with a chalice, for example, on the incised bronze tripod from Mādabā (Piccirillo 1986: fig. 6). In Jewish and Christian literature of the Roman period, the vine was a sign of abundant life at the end of days and represented the Messianic Age (2 Bar 29:5; Jn 2:1–11).⁹

In the late Byzantine period, the inhabited vine is seen on mosaic floors throughout certain sectors of the Levant, from Antioch (Donceel-Voûte 1995: fig. 8) to Gaza and in central and northern Jordan.¹⁰ While this motif is only one of many, it functions in similar fashion to the acanthus leaf which also appears as a scroll, forming medallions filled with images.¹¹ In order to determine the distribution of the vine motif during the Late Byzantine period in Palestine and Transjordan, a total of 480 floors were examined.¹² Of special interest were those design elements that also appear on mould-made ceramic lamps.¹³ These elements include the vine itself, as well as vine scrolls, grape clusters, grape leaves, birds, amphorae, pomegranates, other fruits, palm trees, and rosettes. Two other mosaic design elements included in the quantification that would be useful for a study of the lamp corpus under consideration are the guilloche and the donkey. In order to determine areas of heaviest concentration of this design, each element was quantified as either a single (1) or multiple (2) occurrence. These data were then compared to the degree of occurrence of geometric and scenic designs.¹⁴

At the same time, no attempt was made in this study to repeat the typology and analysis of the inhabited vine design undertaken by Claudine Dauphin (1976), who coded 116 mosaic floors dating

to the 4th–7th centuries. The geographic distribution of her corpus was more extensive than that of the present study, since she analyzed pavements found throughout the Levant, including Constantinople (1976:114).¹⁵ So too, she undertook a more refined comparison in which she distinguished various sections of the mosaic pavements, such as borders, central carpets, and inter-columnar spaces. In view of the variable preservation of the floors themselves, any quantification of the floors and of their decorative motifs remains somewhat approximative.

The Corpus

Transjordan

In Jordan, the single largest group of pavements dating to the 5th–8th centuries has been recovered in the city of Mādabā and the area around Mount Nebo. In this corpus, the principal designs include the inhabited vine, scenes of mythological figures, non-figurative geometric designs, and geometric patterns forming lozenges filled with plants and animals, such as the pattern on the central carpet in the church of the Apostles (Piccirillo 1993: fig. 95) and in the Burnt Palace (Piccirillo 1995: fig. 5). Examples of carpets illustrating all of these elements are present within the city, with the vine scroll being only one element among many.

Vines and vine scrolls are found on 21 pavements among 36 buildings in the Mādabā area.¹⁶ Along with the other elements which occur in association with the vine, the degree of occurrence for this cluster of motifs is 70%. The use of acanthus borders and scrolls, the guilloche (both simple and braided), geometric patterns and various scenes represent 30% degree of occurrence.

⁹ In 2 Baruch, the ten thousand-fold abundance of fruit is manifest in a vine, which will have a thousand branches, each bearing 1000 grape clusters, with each cluster having 1000 grapes, and each grape producing a “cor of wine” (Charlesworth 1983: 6:30), approximately 120 gallons (Brown 1966:105). This Messianic sign is associated by Brown with the miracle at Cana in Jn 2.

¹⁰ Dauphin notes that the popularity of pavements with an inhabited vine in the central field declines in North Africa following its flourish during the 1st–3rd centuries, whereas it increases in popularity in the Levant during the 4th–7th centuries (1987: 184).

¹¹ An example of the acanthus design can be seen in the Burnt Palace in Mādabā (Piccirillo 1993: figs. 49, 50). Dauphin calculates that the inhabited vine appears on 64 of the pavements (55%) in her corpus of 116 mosaic floors, whereas the acanthus scrolls were present on 49 floors (42%; 1987:186).

¹² Sources for the data on each floor are included in the list of references.

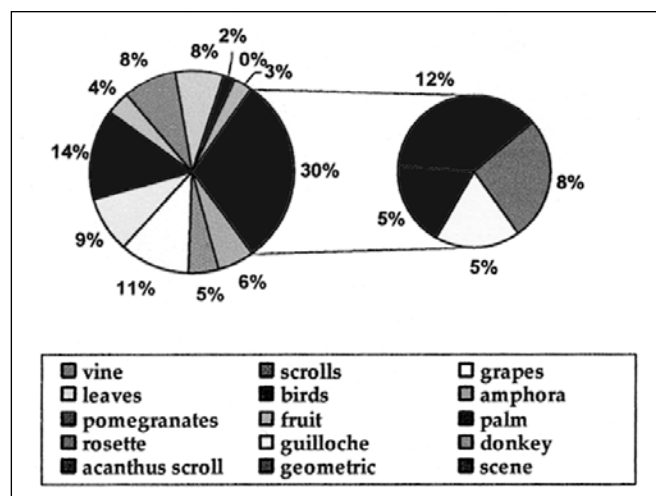
¹³ The major sources are Avi-Yonah (1948), Ovadiah’s *Corpus*

(1970), and its three supplements (Ovadiah and Gomez de Silva 1981, 1982, 1984) for floors in Palestine, and Piccirillo (1993) for mosaic floors in Jordan. More recent reports concerning additional floors have also been included to compute data concerning distribution, such as Horvat Hesheq (Aviam 1993), Tall Mādabā (Foran *et al.* 2004); Gaza (Humbert 2000) and Khirbat Yājūz (Khalil 1998), and various churches mentioned in Tsafirir 1993.

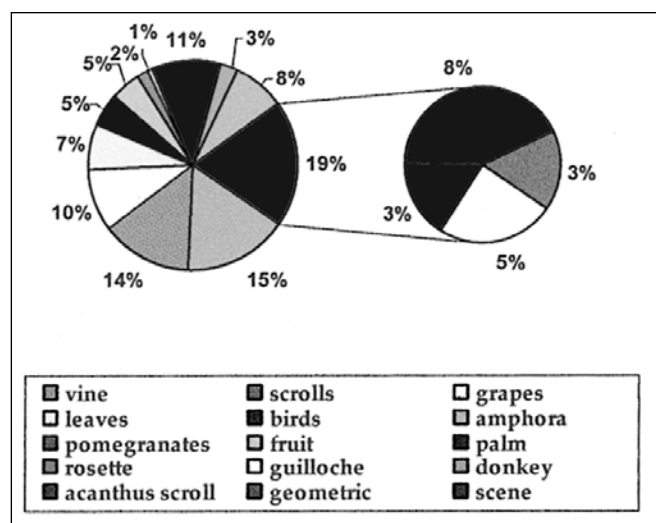
¹⁴ Foran (2003: Table 2a) identified 18 elements depicted in the inhabited vine; the bird and the donkey are both relevant for this study, but other elements and human figures are not included in the present study since they do not appear on the lamps.

¹⁵ Among her “types of scroll work” (C_1 – C_4), Dauphin (1976: fig. 1) does not illustrate four parallel scrolls of equal size, such as the pattern represented on the floor of the Church of the Holy Martyrs Lot and Procopius (Piccirillo 1993: fig. 202).

¹⁶ Foran (2003: Table 1) lists 31 pavements, with the inhabited vine scroll occurring on 45% of these floors.

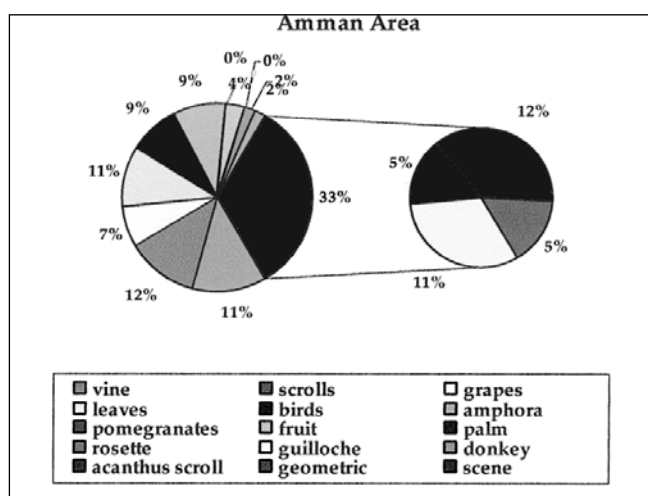


Sites to the south and north of Mādabā in central Jordan make use of the vine motif and its elements to an even greater degree, especially at Umm ar-Raṣāṣ, where it is seen in the Church of Saint Stephen (Piccirillo 1993: fig. 383). Other sites in this area include Mā'in, Mukāwir village, Māsūḥ, and Ḥisbān. In this group, the degree of occurrence for the geometric designs falls to 19%, with the vine and its associated elements constituting 81%.



The 'Ammān area has a slightly different profile, due in part to the small number of floors reported for this area in our corpus (7 out of 148 for Jordan). Nevertheless, the vine motif remains dominant at 66%, with only 33% degree of occurrence for non-vine elements.

Sites north of 'Ammān reflect a very different



tradition. Although the vine scrolls and vines without medallions appear on certain floors at Jarash, these are now minor themes,¹⁷ with geometric patterns forming the dominant decorative schemes. This can be seen clearly in the Synagogue Church, the Procopius Church, the Church of St. George and the Church of Cosmas and Damian (Piccirillo 1993: figs. 553, 560, 535). In the Church of Bishop Isaiah, the vine motif is relegated to inter-columnar spaces (1993: fig. 565) and to the chancel, whereas the nave is paved with an elaborate geometric carpet (1993: fig. 566).

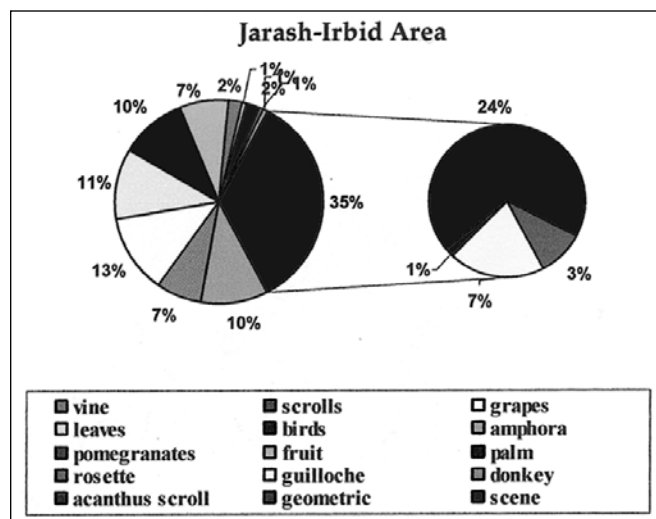
At Khirbat as-Samrā, the dominant designs are geometric with fruit or flowers and an occasional grape cluster inside of quadrilobes (Piccirillo 1993:306: figs. 600, 601). In the Church of St. George, the vine, grape leaves, and birds are not present. The only motif relevant to our study is a simple guilloche which surrounds the central inscription in the nave. The inscription in the Church of Saint Peter also has a guilloche border (1993: fig. 607) surrounded by geometric pavements. The exception here is the floor of the Chapel of Anastasius, where the central carpet has four vine scrolls sprouting from amphorae located in the four corners.

Among the 10 churches at Riḥāb, only the Church of Saint Paul has a design of vine scrolls emerging from an amphora, and this pattern is located in the inter-columnar spaces (Piccirillo 1993: figs. 627–629), rather than the central carpet. The simple guilloche appears as a border in an inter-columnar space in the Church of Saint Peter, and

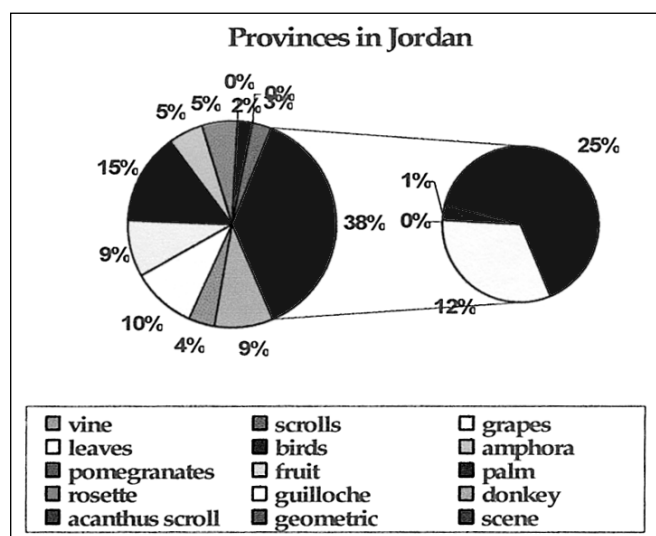
¹⁷ Dauphin identified Jarash as one of her four important centres, with Jerusalem as a minor centre (1976: 133). The opposite is suggested here; while Jarash may have had a mosaic workshop,

geometric and scenic designs (representing donors) were the dominant motifs employed.

in a side aisle in the Church of Saint Mary (1993: figs. 633, 622), while the dominant border designs are meanders in various styles.



A similar degree of occurrence is represented at sites in Palestina Prima, Secunda, and Tertia, where the most common design is a geometric pattern. This area includes sites in the Jordan Valley and at Petra.



When we consider the actual number of floors, the results shows that the greatest concentration for the vine motif is in central Jordan.

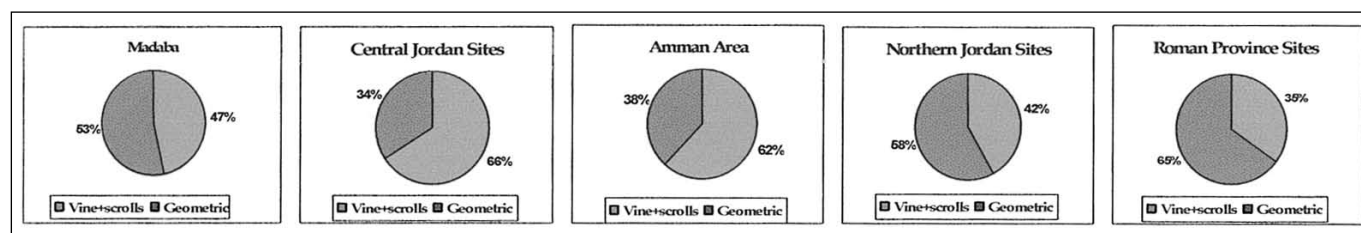
To the north, the opposite is the case with geometric patterns becoming the dominant decorative design for mosaic carpets. The same is true in southern Jordan; one example of the vine motif is used in a side aisle in the Petra Church (Fiema 2001: 309; North aisle), whereas the nave of this church has a stone pavement. Of interest is the limited use of the inhabited vine in Palestine during the same period.

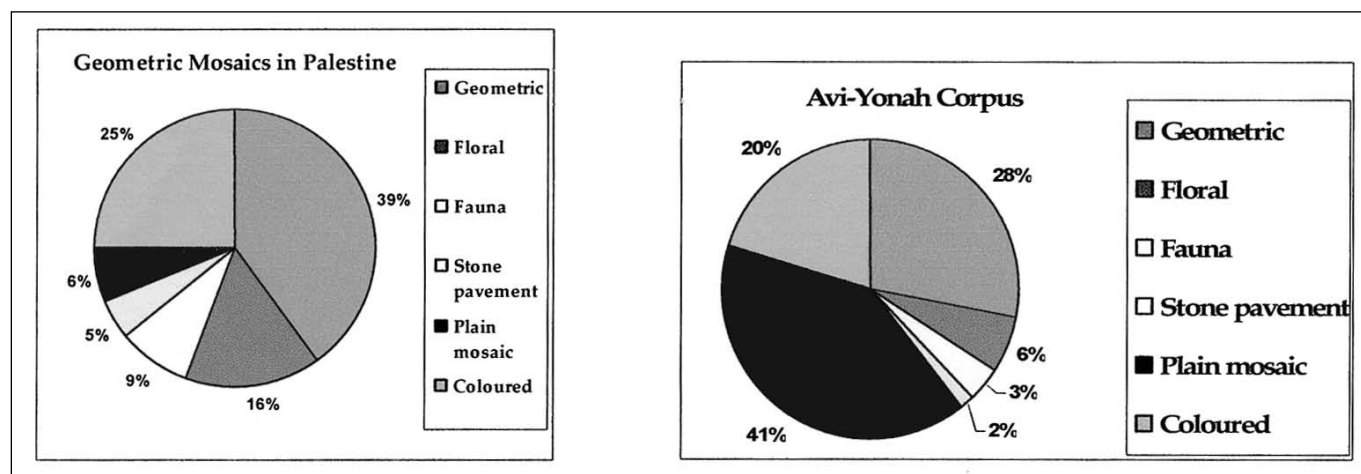
Palestine

Due to the large number of mosaic floors in Cisjordan, my analysis is divided into two groups; first, those with geometric designs, plain mosaics, or stone pavements, and secondly, those floors where the vine motif is dominant.

Geometric Mosaics: Beginning in Jerusalem and extending throughout Palestine, the dominant decorative scheme is the elaborate geometric mosaic. In some cases, the pattern is formed by floral elements, whereas on other floors the design consists of entwined pentagons and hexagons that provide small areas for bird, animal and floral elements. Such a carpet can be seen on floor fragments at Ḥorvat Berachot and on the floor of the Western Church at Kurnub/Mampsis in the central Negev (Tzaferis 1993:890). Altogether, these styles of geometric floors represent 64% of those without the vine motif. Among the pavements dating to the 5th–7th centuries in the corpus assembled by Avi-Yonah (1948), 91% can be classified as geometric, plain, coloured mosaics or stone pavements.

Vine Scrolls: Admittedly, the vine motif is not unknown and appears on a small number of mosaic floors and in architecture. For example, the combination of the amphora, the vine with its grape clusters and leaves, as well as a rosette, appears carved above two birds over the entrance of the cave tomb of Shefa 'Amr (Testa 1990: fig. 7). Mosaic floors at Borvat Beit Loya (Patrich and Tsafrir 1993: pl. XVIII:A, B, D, E), Ḥorvat Be'er Shem'a (Gazit and Lender 1993: pl. XX, XXI) and at the Monastery of St. Martyrius at Ma'ale Adummim (Magen 1993: pls. X:A, XI:A) all have the standard





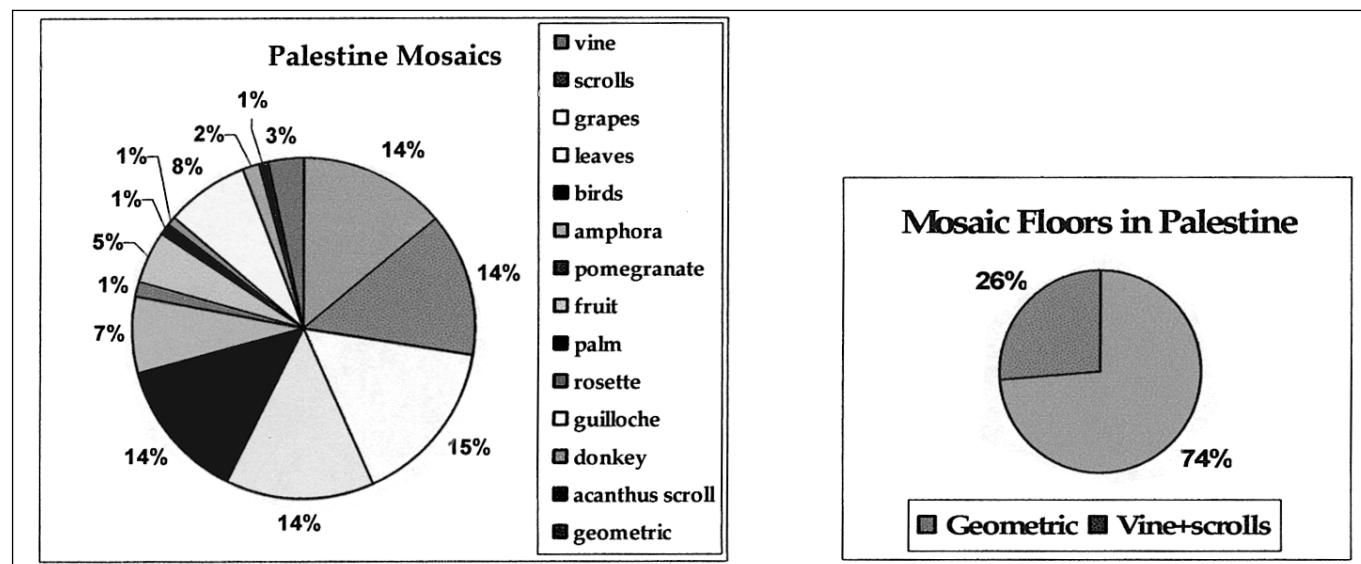
vine scrolls filled with images of plants, animals and people. Among these floors, the degree of occurrence of the various motifs is similar to that of central Jordan, although not in terms of the number of pavements.¹⁸

Sites with the vine are found on occasion in Jerusalem, Judea, the Shephelah and Gaza in the south, and at Caesarea and Beth Shean in the north.¹⁹ What is significant for this study is the lack of a concentration of the mosaic floors with the inhabited vine in a given area, apart from Jerusalem and its environs. The wide distribution of the remaining floors opens up many questions concerning the mo-

saicists who made these floor and the origin of their designs (cf. Foran 2003).

The Inhabited Vine on Mould-made Lamps

Among the minor arts, the mould-made ceramic lamp also displays the inhabited vine motif. Such lamps are very distinctive and a number of unprovenanced finds have been published from private collections and from museum holdings. Of greater interest are those lamps that come from controlled excavations throughout Palestine and Jordan. At many sites, there are one or two examples of these lamps;²⁰ however, much larger collections come



¹⁸ In Jordan, there are twice as many floors with the vine motif, even though there are many fewer sites excavated than in Israel.

¹⁹ In the warehouse complex in front of vault 12, there were two sections of a mosaic carpet with vine scrolls sprouting from amphorae in the corners of the pavement (Lehmann 1999: figs. 9, 10). A square pavement, uncovered in a northeastern suburb of Byzantine period Caesarea, has 120 medallions, each containing

a bird (Holum *et al.* 1988: fig. 132). Although inspired by the inhabited vine motif, these medallions are geometric, with no floral or vegetal elements.

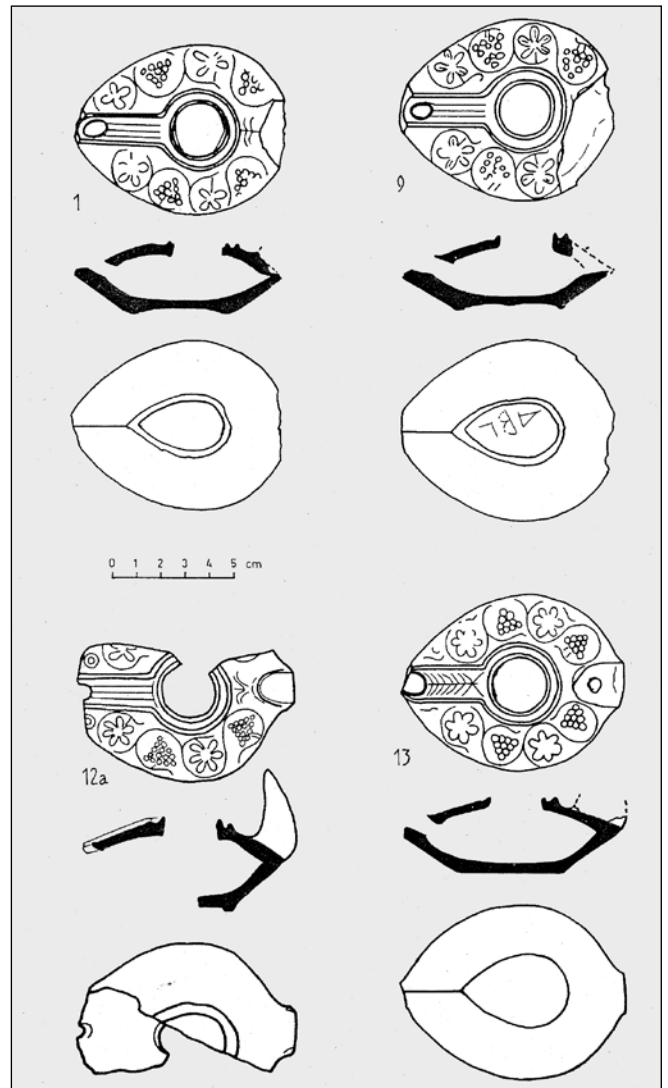
²⁰ More recently, the excavations at Shuqayra al-Gharbiyya (Shdaifat *et al.* 2006: fig. 7:10, 11) yielded one lamp with a pomegranate and vine motif, and a lamp fragment with an amphora.

from the excavations at the Probatika in Jerusalem and Tall Jāwā in central Jordan.

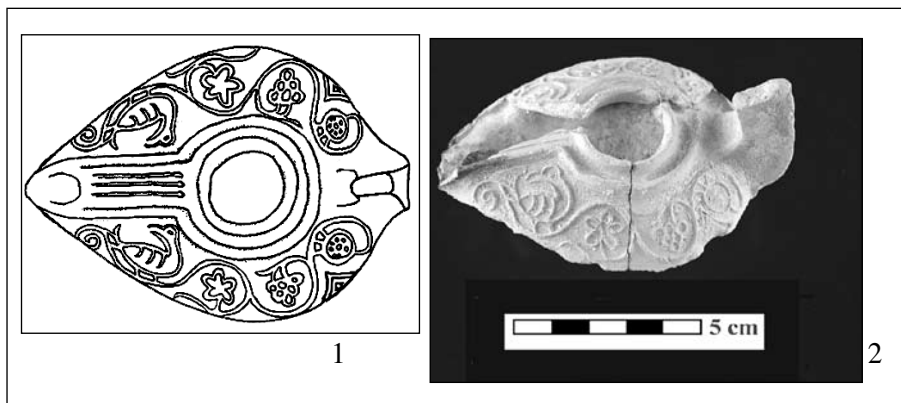
Jerusalem: The Probatika church and pool yielded 127 lamps with a vine scroll on the shoulder (FIG. 2; Arndt 1987: 241). The dominant design consists of two grape clusters and two leaves in the vine (I *gruppo*). Less common are vine scrolls with a pomegranate and a bird (II *gruppo*). So too, a vine sprouting from an amphora lying on its side is relatively rare and is a subtype of Arndt's II *gruppo*; a small vertical amphora appears to be more common at Jerusalem. Other designs include either a stylized vine with several grape clusters or a vine with enlarged grapes and a stylized leaf or flower.

Tall Jāwā: The corpus from the early Islamic building (B600) at Tall Jāwā includes 74 lamps and lamp fragments with various designs of the vine motif.²¹ These lamps are similar in shape to those from Jerusalem and have similar designs in the channel (either parallel ridges or herringbone design). The pomegranate as the first element in the scroll is seen on 51% of the 56 best preserved lamps, where it is the dominant element flanking the handle (FIG. 3). Apart from the grape clusters and leaves, the most common element is a bird on either side of the channel. The birds may face the handle or look over their shoulder toward the nozzle. In some cases, the two birds on a single lamp face in different directions (see FIG. 4.2).

The second most common element is the amphora²² at 18%, followed by a palm tree at 13%. Those lamps with more than one grape cluster are 9% of the assemblage, whereas the rosette is represented on only 7% of this group and the flower on 2%.



2. Lamps with two grape clusters alternating with two grape leaves encircled by vine tendrils, from the Probatika corpus (after Arndt 1987: figs. 1, 9, 12A, 13; published with permission of M. Piccirillo for *Liber Annuus*).

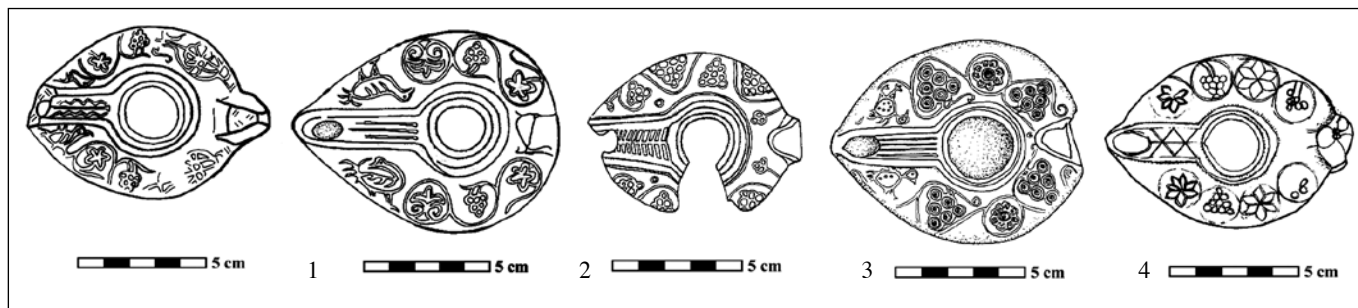


3. Standard design of inhabited vine with pomegranate and addorsed bird; 1) model drawing; 2) V1614.

²¹ For a complete study of these lamps, see Daviau 2008.

²² The amphora motif had a long history, appearing as the central motif on the discus of early Roman lamps at Samaria (Crowfoot

1957: fig. 88:9). These lamps were assigned by Crowfoot to the 1st century AD, and by L. E. Toombs to the 2nd century (personal communication).



4. 1) amphora, V1642; 2) palm, V1660; 3) all grapes, V1644; 4) rosette, V1629; 5) star-shaped flower, V1628.

Guilloche and Donkey Parade

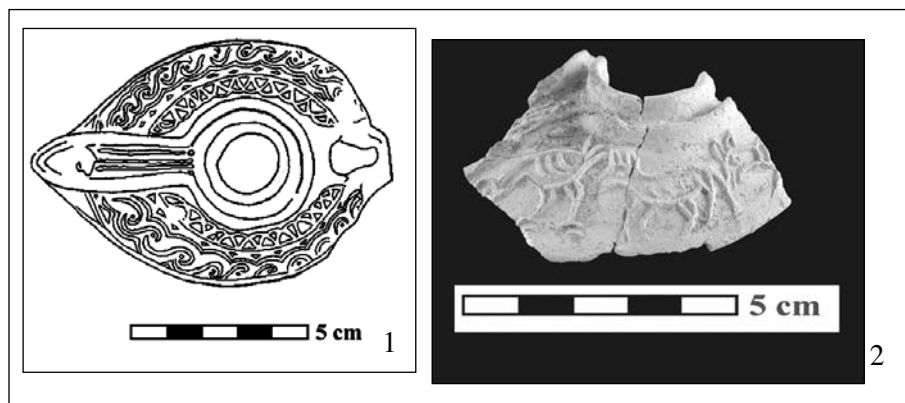
Two secondary motifs appear on the Tall Jāwā lamps, the guilloche and the parade of donkeys. In each of these groups, a number of well preserved lamps enable us to identify more than one lamp from the same mould. The guilloche was used extensively on mosaic floors as a border design surrounding large carpets, inter-columnar spaces, and inscriptions.²³ This design had a widespread geographical distribution, framing large geometric carpets formed with florets as in the domestic buildings at Ephesus (Parrish 1995: figs. 5, 6, 12). The guilloche is also found surrounding a group of small carpets in a side aisle of a church in Corsica (Campbell 1995: fig. 8), and was used as far afield as Verulamium in Britain (Tebby 1994: fig. 9). This pattern is often associated with single and double braided borders.

Lamps with the guilloche design, as well as those with a parade of donkeys, were made in the same shape as those with the inhabited vine (FIG. 5). At least nine lamps with guilloche motif are present in the Tall Jāwā corpus. Of the two designs, the donkey parade is the most unusual, with the only known

parallel coming from the Umayyad palace on the 'Ammān citadel (Olávarri-Goicoechea 1985:24–25; fig. 24:12). This link suggests the concentration of an artistic tradition and production centre which incorporates Tall Jāwā in the 'Ammān area, but apparently did not extend beyond central Jordan.

A Continuing Tradition

Evidence for the importance of the vine motif in the region between Jerusalem and central Jordan can also be seen in its utilization in Byzantine architectural decoration and in early Islamic ornamentation. Vines sprouting from amphorae along with their leaves and grape clusters form a border on a scenic mosaic at Qaṣr Ḥallabāt. In other early Islamic buildings, the vine appears along with a large number of other floral and faunal images. This can be seen clearly in the architecture of the Reception Hall of the palace on the 'Ammān Citadel. Here, a vine with three large grape clusters appears above one of the decorated panels in register 1 (Northedge 1992: fig. 47:8.98Aa=pl. 26C), while vines with multiple grape cluster, leaves and buds decorate two of the small panels (1992: fig. 49:



5. 1) guilloche, V1640; 2) donkey parade, V1633.

²³ The guilloche was also used with plain mosaics. For example, among the mosaics uncovered in the Basilica of the Nativity, is a

section of white mosaic with a single guilloche stripe (Richmond 1936: pl. XLVIII).

30Ab=pl. 22E, SN/26; 80Ab/B=pl. 25C). A more elaborate vine with leaves and clusters fills one of the larger panels in register 2 (1992: fig. 53: 1. SW/D=pl. 27B).

Also of interest to our study of the lamp corpus is the association of the vine with the rosette; two examples of this combination are preserved on a plaster balustrade at Hishām's palace. Here at Khirbat al-Mafjar, a border of rosettes surrounds a field of vines heavy with grape clusters (Hamilton 1948: pl. XV). Other plaster fragments include grape clusters entwined with other floral elements, as well as one example of vines growing out of an amphora (1948: pl. XXIII). This motif is also represented on a limestone architectural fragment at Khirbat al-Mafjar (FIG. 6.3).

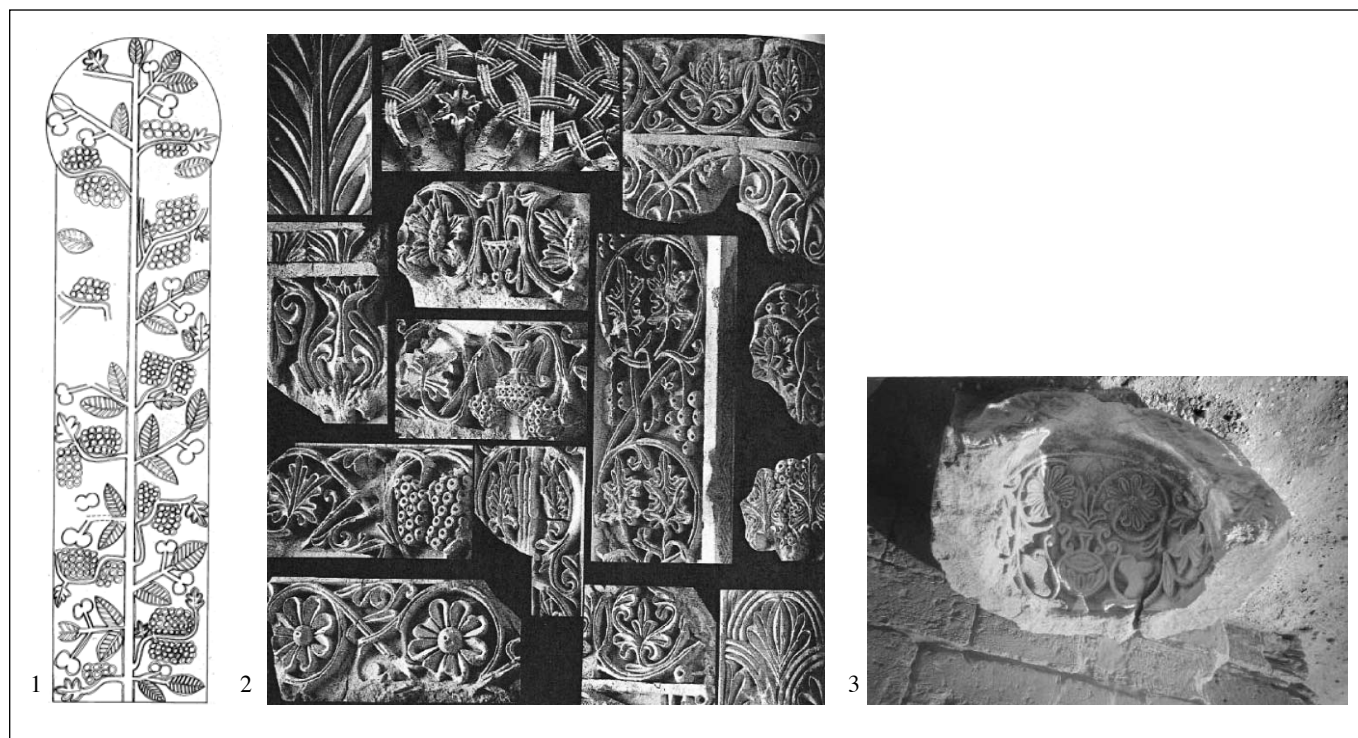
More elaborate are the vine scrolls that surround medallions containing flowers, real and imaginary animals, and birds on the carved façade of Qaṣr al-Mushatta's reception hall (Enderlein and Meinecke 1993). The vine and the amphora were also used as a motif on the interior of the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem, although by this time, the vine is no longer inhabited; instead it is a thick vine heavy with leaves and fruits of various kinds (Rosen-Ayalon 1989). The amphora itself has changed in form and

is jeweled in style, which suggests a transformation of the artistic tradition.

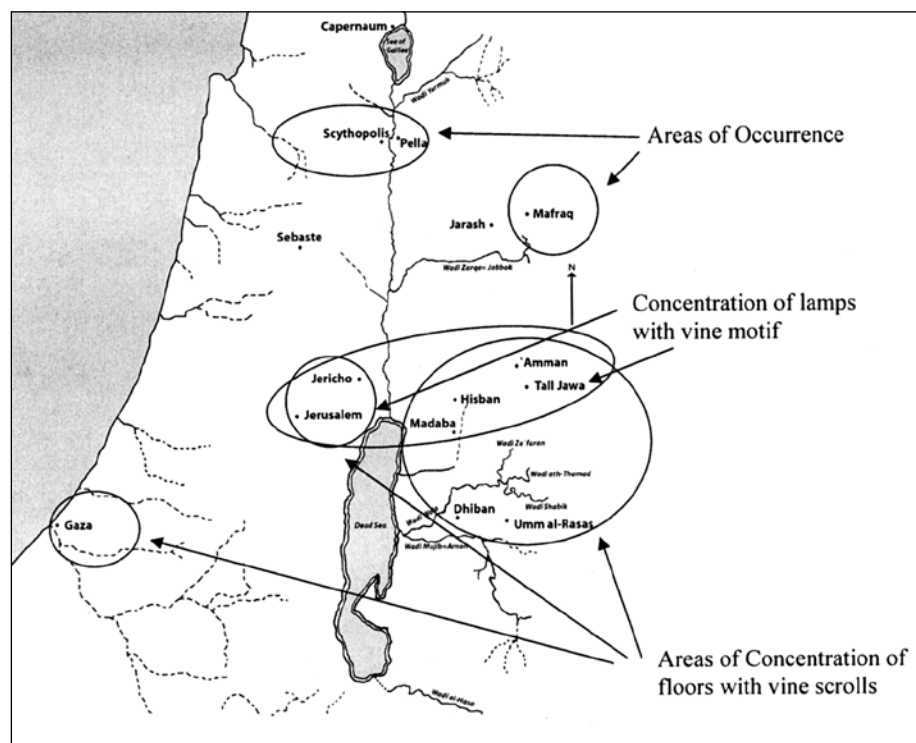
In Jordan, the most unusual combination of elements related to the inhabited vine motif appears on basalt slabs from an Umayyad period platform at the reservoir at 'Ayn as-Sawdā near al-Azraq. Three slabs each have the same design; two tendrils, each bearing three pomegranates, sprout from an amphora and are topped by a palmette (Vibert-Guigue 2006: 347; figs. 14:43; 18; 36). Although the basic amphora and vine motif is employed, there is again a difference in style and the addition of new elements, in this case, the palmette.

Conclusions

In this study, I investigated the spread and degree of occurrence of the inhabited vine and associated decorative motifs as an aspect of the artistic tradition of the late Byzantine–early Islamic period. While these elements had a wide distribution, their concentration in a particular area, extending from Jerusalem to Mādabā and beyond to 'Ammān in the north and to Umm ar-Raṣāṣ in the south, goes hand in hand with that of mould-made lamps with similar designs (FIG. 7). Whether at this time we



6. 1) Panel from the Umayyad palace on the 'Ammān citadel (after Northedge 1992: fig. pl. 27B; published with permission of the author and CRBL); 2) stucco from Hishām's palace (after Hamilton 1948: pl. XV); 3) architectural fragment at Hishām's palace; photo, M. Beckmann.



7. Map showing distribution of mosaic floors with vine motif and the distribution of lamps also using the vine as the principal artistic design.

posit a chronological coincidence,²⁴ or infer that the Madaba mosaic workshop, studied by Foran (2003), was responsible for the popularity of the vine scroll motif in this region, remains tentative. However, the high standards of artistic skill in the production of both the floors and the lamps make it clear that their coincidence was anything but a random phenomenon. In the early Islamic period, the vine also appears to be concentrated in the area between Jerusalem and Umm ar-Rasās. Apart from Qaṣr al-Ḥallabāt and ‘Ayn as-Sawdā, the vine motif is present at Jericho (Hishām’s Palace) ‘Ammān, and Mushatta.

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²⁴ Winter has pointed out that it is important that the date of one artistic medium is fairly well ascertained in order to avoid circular

reasoning regarding the directionality of artistic influence (1989: 326).

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