

Inventory of Roman Mosaics in Portugal. Cataloguing and Analysis of Geometric Motifs: 2. The Pelta

Portekiz 'deki Roma Mozaiklerinin Envanteri. Geometrik Motiflerin Kataloglanması ve Analizi: 2. Pelta

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Abstract


As part of the RoGeMoPorTur international cooperation project and in parallel with the Inventory of Roman Mosaics in Portugal, a catalogue of the different geometric motifs present on these pavements is being drawn up. In the present work - the second in a series that began with the study of the meander (Duran Kremer 2016) and is dedicated to analysing the meaning and iconography of the motifs chosen for the decoration of Roman mosaics in the current territory of Portugal - we focus on one of the oldest motifs present in the decoration of the pavement - the pelta.

Keywords: Roman mosaics, pattern, pelta, inventory, Roman villa, role of pattern in spatial planning.

Öz

RoGeMoPorTur uluslararası işbirliği projesinin bir parçası olarak ve Portekiz'deki Roma Mozaikleri Envanteri'ne paralel olarak, mozaik döşemelerde bulunan farklı geometrik motiflerin bir kataloğu hazırlanmaktadır. Meander çalışmasıyla başlayan ve Portekiz'in mevcut topraklarındaki Roma mozaiklerinin dekorasyonu için seçilen motiflerin anlamlarını ve ikonografisini analiz etmeye adanmış bir serinin ikincisi olan bu çalışmada, döşeme dekorasyonunda kullanılan en eski motiflerden birisi olan pelta motifi ele alınmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Roma mozaikleri, desen, pelta, envanter, Roma villası, mekansal planlamada desenin rolü.

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Introduction

Following on from the work to collect as many Roman mosaics as possible in what is now Portuguese territory, it has proved necessary to draw up a parallel catalogue of the geometric motifs present on them. This work is constantly being updated, as it is being completed as new mosaics come to our attention.

For this purpose, it was established from the beginning that basic „archaeological sites“ would be established, through which the survey of compositions and patterns would begin (Duran Kremer 2016: 135).

During the survey of the different patterns, the pelta became increasingly individualised as one of the most frequent in the territory, integrated into numerous mosaic compositions. In fact, this is a phenomenon that can be seen throughout *Hispania*: as a pattern that can be easily adapted to the chosen decorative grammar, we find it present in almost all its variants: in linear or surface compositions and as a decorative element for other geometric figures¹.

One of the most interesting aspects linked to the use of pelta in mosaic flooring is undoubtedly the fact that we can find different variants of this pattern on the same floor, integrated into the composition according to well-defined decorative canons when drawing up the iconographic programme to be implemented.

For the final catalogue, we use all the examples of floors with peltas that we are aware of and have access to, and which we will include in the final publication as far as possible². For the present study, we have chosen from among them examples that are representative of most of the different variants of the use of pelta as a decorative element and of its geographical distribution, in order to outline a possible identification of the regionalisation of the motif or even possibly of identifiable regional workshops in time and space, without, however, proceeding to a stylistic analysis of the mosaic in which they appear - a study that would go beyond the limits of the present work and which will be an integral part of the respective Inventory sheets under preparation³.

The Pattern *Pelta*

Identifying the origin of patterns used to decorate mosaic floors often leads us back to a repertoire of motifs commonly used in textile production, which would have served as a source for the creation of a pictorial or mosaic repertoire. This assumption is certainly correct when it comes to many geometric motifs, such as we can easily identify in archaic and classical Greek ceramics.

1 The presence of the pelta as element of roman mosaics compositions in *Hispania* was studied in detail by Vargas Vázquez, whose work on geometric patterns in *Baetica* is today an obligatory stylistic and chronological reference point (Vargas Vázquez 2013-2014, 2014, 2016, 2017).

2 For the Inventory of Roman Mosaics in Portugal, we have not only been covering the most recently published mosaics in specialised books and magazines, but we have also, as far as possible, carried out a bibliographical survey of the news about the appearance of mosaic pavements. The number of mosaics depicting peltas is far greater than the examples chosen for the present study. However, many of them are not published, nor do we have access to photographs of them, so we will not include them in the Catalogue of this paper. For a description and interpretation of many of them from a floral perspective, see Wrench 2005.

3 It should be emphasised that for the study of this motif, as we have been doing for the study of geometric mosaics, we have taken as a benchmark Salies 1974 (outline diagrams), Décor I (ornamental decoration) and Blanchard et al. 1973 (graphic repertoire). Likewise, in order to use as much as possible a uniform linguistic register, we will use the definitions of motifs and compositions in Décor 1985. We should also emphasise the fact that whenever possible we refer to photographs that have already been published in different articles and books, especially if they were taken with the quality required for a good publication.

Used as an ornament on mosaic floors from a very early date, this pattern took its name from *πέλιτη* - a light, flat, round or leaf-shaped shield made of wickerwork or wood with light leather fittings, which served the Thracian light-armed (*πελτασταί*) as a protective weapon (Neumann 1979: 4, 610).

In fact, classical authors cite the half-shaped pelta (*pelta lunata*) as a weapon used by the Amazons⁴: and it is precisely in archaic and classical Greek ceramics that we find the first representations of the pelta/shield as a weapon used above all in scenes from the Amazonomachy (Boardmann 1981: figs. 31, 127; Boardmann 1991: figs. 132, 159.1). However, when it comes to identifying the motif on the mosaic pavements with the *pelta lunata* from the Amazonomachy, the scientific community is not unanimous: while for some authors the identification of this pattern with the pelta/shield is given⁵ (Parzysz - Pessoa 2019: 40), for others there is no clear relationship between the two⁶ (Kankeleit 1994: 4). In our opinion, however, the first possibility cannot be dismissed out of hand: in the Hydria of the painter Polychorus, the representation of shields is certainly very close to the pelta as a pattern (Trendall 1991: fig. 27). Even closer is the representation of the Ganymede's shield in the mosaic "The rape of Ganymede by Zeus", from the House of Dionysos, in Paphos (Cyprus) (Fig. 1). This mosaic, dating from

Figure 1
The rape of Ganymede, House of Dionysos
(Paphos, Cyprus) © Duran Kremer.



the end of the 2nd century, beginning of the 3rd century AD, shows the abduction of Ganymede by Zeus disguised as an eagle: wearing only a Phrygian cap as his only item of clothing, his weapons are a spear in his right hand, the shield attached to the eagle's right wing by a strap. The shape of the shield is very close to the shape later taken by the pelta with volutes and the central point ending in a triangle. A mosaic from Conimbriga (Sales - Abraços 2019: fig. 22) that was till recently exhibited on the floor of the Conimbriga Monographic Museum (the

4 Verg. Aen. 1, 490: "ducit Amazonidum lunatis agmina peltis Penthesilea furens mediisque in milibus ardet".

5 "The pelta was the small crescent-shaped shield worn by the Amazons" (translation by the author).

6 "Despite the name "pelta" and the apparent similarity with real Amazon shields there is no clear connection between the ornament and the weapon. Depictions of pelta shields on Roman mosaics in turn show no relation to the geometric pelta ornament (see, for example, pelta shields on mosaics in Pompeii)" (translation by the author).

so called *cantharus* and *simpulum* mosaic) shows an upright pelta decorating one of the squares of the composition, occupying more than half of the square, behind which is a two-bladed axe similar to the one found in the *stamnos* by the painter Kleophrades (Boardman 1981: 102-105 fig. 137), allowing the pelta to be identified as a shield.

The use of pelta as a decorative pattern on mosaic floors began with the appearance of linear compositions in the Augustan era. The first known example appears in Pompeii, where it is defined as an individual pattern used mainly to decorate the thresholds of compartments, in number and distribution depending on their size (Donderer 1986: 120, 2). As a motif to fill surface compositions, it only appeared in Northern Italy in the last quarter of the same century (Donderer 1986: 141), from where it spread throughout the Roman Empire.

From then on, the pelta took on different roles in the spatial planning of the floor: chosen as a sober ornament in the composition, with or without stylised decoration, it was initially used above all in passageways and communication areas, in porticos that opened up to uncovered areas (Musso 2016: 93) or even as a frame pattern, for filling corridors or front carpets (Hoffmann et al. 1999: 60). In the territory of present-day Portugal we find the pelta very frequently, framed in an extremely rich and varied descriptive syntax, which is also part of the evolution of this motif recorded in the mosaic pavements of *Hispania* in general⁷.

For a more structured analysis of the different variants, both in terms of form and composition, we follow the definition of Blanchard et al. 1973: pelta as an element, pelta in linear composition, pelta in surface composition (Blanchard et al. 1973: 6-8). Thresholds are included here in surface compositions, as they correspond to a surface delimited in space, without repetition.

In this paper we will focus mainly on the representations of peltae in linear and surface composition: there are so many examples of peltae as a mere decorative element to fill small spaces both in number and variation, the mere enumeration of all would be beyond the scope of this article. It will be dealt with each one in the inventory sheet for the floor in which they appear. However, we have included a short list of few examples that we think are representative, even if some of them have not been paralleled on Roman pavements in the territory under consideration.

Pelta as a Decoration Motive in Roman Mosaics in Today's Portugal

The use of pelta in linear compositions, defining spaces or compositions based on a mostly geometric decorative grammar, although sometimes filled with plant elements, appears for the first time in the roman mosaics in the considered territory of today's Portugal probably in the last quarter of the 2nd century of our era⁸: this is the case of mosaic H from the Roman *villa* of Torres Novas (*villa* Cardílio) (A3).

From a stylistic point of view, this mosaic belongs to a phase in which polychromy, plant and figurative motifs are integrated into the geometric structure

7 "From Italy, the motif is passed on to the provinces, although the willingness to accept it varies from region to region. The North African Mosaicists included it in their repertoire, as did those on the Iberian Peninsula". Hoffman et al. 1999: 60, 74-77 (translation by the author).

8 In *Baetica*, it is visible in a mosaic that dates to the end of the first - beginning of the second century and decorates one of the *balneum* areas at the Fuente Álamo archaeological site (Puente Genil, Córdoba) (Vargas Vázquez 2016: 275).

of mosaic compositions, and when the tendency towards colour and repetitive composition as a structuring feature is evident, but the simplification of forms and the reduction of motifs not yet tangible. The fine drawing of the motifs, the richness of colour, the variety of plant ornaments together with the introduction of figurative motifs on the central carpet, assign this mosaic to the artistic trend that made itself felt in the empire between the second half of the 2nd century and the first half of the 3rd century. The stylistic proximity to the mosaic of Room 9 of the Casa dos Repuxos (A2), set in a stylistically comparable environment and dated by Barrão Oleiro to the end of the 2nd century or the first quarter of the 3rd century (Barrão Oleiro 1992: vol. I, 109) allows - with reference to this dating - an initial chronological classification of the mosaic H. The identification of the motif of half pelts inscribed in some of the squares of the composition of the entrance carpet in the room with the motif of half pelts present in the side carpets of mosaic H (C8, C10) (Barrão Oleiro 1992: vol. I, 107), as well as the analysis of the motifs present in both carpets, allows us to identify a workshop of mosaicists who would have worked in the region precisely during this period.

On the other hand, from a stylistic point of view, the mosaic from the *villa* Cardílio shows greater perfection in its execution, a greater variety of shapes and the use of tesserae of different sizes to create more perfect forms and nuances. It is precisely this richness of form and colour, combined with a sophisticated laying technique, that indicates that this mosaic predates those of Casa dos Repuxos (Duran Kremer 1999: 122-124). It is also interesting to note that in Villa Cardilio, the pelta is no longer found as a linear or surface compositional motif in the pavements known to date: the only representation of pelta is in a single square with rounded corners and concave sides, as a decorative element, in Panel B of the peristyle (C9), in a composition for which we have found no parallels to date in Roman mosaics of the territory considered⁹ (Fig. 16).

The other mosaics analysed are generally chronologically attributed to the end of the 3rd and 4th centuries¹⁰.

Based on the representative choice in the Catalogue, an initial analysis of the known mosaics leads us to conclude that the use of pelta as the external delimitation of the central composition is mainly present in the *conventus pacensis*, while in the three examples chosen from the *conventus scallabitanus* (A1, A2, A3) it takes the form of simple, traditional pelta, of Italian influence. On the other hand, the majority of the examples considered in this convent testify to a clearly decorative attribution to this element of the composition, with the introduction of polychromy and plant elements that more or less determine it (e.g. A9, A11, A12).

A similar observation can be applied to the introduction of pelta as a theme in surface compositions: the use of polychromy and the plant element introduce a note of light and movement into a decorative grammar that was initially sober and structured. The importance of continuity in the composition is clear in the mosaic B11), where part of the destroyed original flooring is recovered with the same motif, albeit monochrome (probably carried out by another mosaic workshop that reduced the original motif to the pelta drawn in black with a triangle or small flower in the centre). The importance of the pelta as a motif is

9 This mosaic was deeply damaged when we first worked in the villa. Over the years the deterioration process has continued, and today this fragment of mosaic no longer exists as far as we know. For illustration purposes, we bring here a drawing made at the time.

10 The aim of this work does not include a chronological analysis of the pavements, so we respect the chronologies advanced in the respective publications.

even more emphasised also in Pisões: the restoration of the pavement in room 3 (Duran Kremer - Serra 2022: fig. 9), which was badly destroyed and restored in antiquity, shows attempts to recover the original motif (a red flower in the central point and stems extending from the vertices).

In the mosaics considered, the pelta obeys above all to a “linear” semantics, without the introduction of perspective in the decoration of the floor, even when polychrome or on contrasting backgrounds. When used as a decorative element for geometric figures created by the organisation of the surface to be decorated, as is the case with the different variants of the *Rautensternsystem* (Salies 1974: 5-8), the pelta, alone or in composition, often introduces light and colour in an often two-coloured composition. The territory of present-day Portugal is no exception: whether as a *Rautensternsystem* or as *Bandkreuzgeflecht* III, from which the former derives (Salies 1974: 3-5), we find numerous pavements whose decoration was arranged according to one of these schemes. However, it is in the south of the *conventus pacensis* - the present-day Algarve - where we find the greatest concentration of pavements whose decoration followed this geometric scheme¹¹.

One of the most interesting features of the representation of the pelta in the territories of present-day Portugal is the parallelism between the form chosen by the Mosaics of North Africa and Hispania (Hoffman et al. 1999: 60)¹², and which then develops into a vegetal line, replacing the triangle of the central point with tassels, leaves or flowers in bud or open, mono- or polychromatic, with or without volutes, with or without stems in the extensions of the vertices. On the other hand, we find in this *conventus* a multiplicity of representations of this motif that are strictly decorative.

The analysis of this catalogue undoubtedly reinforces the identification of a workshop of mosaicists working in the territory to the south of the *conventus pacensis*, which we had already identified when studying the mosaics of Abicada and the role they played in the context of the Roman mosaics of the Algarve (Duran Kremer 2011). The cataloguing and analysis of the other motifs present in the mosaics of present-day Portugal and their comparative-analytical study in the context of the Inventory of Roman Mosaics in Portugal will undoubtedly provide us with more information about the period in which this workshop operated and its geographical field of action.

¹¹ For a more global analysis of the organisation of the surface to be decorated in the south of the *conventus pacensis*, see Teichner 2008: vol. 1-2.

¹² “The north-african mosaists include it in their repertoire, as do those on the Iberian Peninsula, by adding small triangles at the tips” (translation by the author).

Catalogue (Selection)¹³

A -Linear Composition

1. Conimbriga: (variation of Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 454) Casa dos Repuxos, east wing of the peristyle, a line of black peltae on white ground, facing outwards, two-coloured interspersed with two-coloured lozenges on the tip, to delimit the composition. (Bairrão Oleiro 1992: vol. I, 52-54, vol. II pl.13).

2. Conimbriga: Casa dos Repuxos, south wing of the peristyle, a line of black peltae facing outwards, of different sizes according to the space they fill created by the geometric scheme of the central composition. (Bairrão Oleiro 1992: vol. I, vol. II pl.4).

3. Torres Novas: *villa* Cardilio, room H: a line of black peltae on a white ground, facing outwards, interspersed with black losanges recumbent black lozenges on a white ground, to delimit the geometric composition on both sides of the central composition. (Duran Kremer 2008a: 71-72 fig.11).

4. Milreu (Décor I: 108, 58a): undulating row of alternately inverted peltae framing the central composition, the shape outlined in black, on a white background, with a serrated triangle on the central point. (Lancha - Oliveira 2013: nr. 30 pl. XC).

5. Milreu (Décor I: 108, 58b): undulating row of alternately inverted peltae framing the central composition, in black on a white background, with a pair of tassels on the central point. (Oliveira 2010: nr. 28 b, vol. II pl. XLVII).

6. Milreu (Blanchard et al. 1973: 49 fig. 234): undulating row of alternately inverted peltae framing the central composition, on a white background, in counterchanged colours. (Lancha - Oliveira 2013: nr. 30 pl. XLII).

7. Monte de S. Salvador (Campo Maior) (Décor I: 108, 58a): undulating row of alternately inverted peltae framing the centre composition, two-coloured, on a white background, with a serrated triangle on the central point¹⁴.

8. Milreu (Décor I: 107, 57f): row of quasi-tangent pairs of backed two-coloured peltae, alternately upright and recumbent, in counterchanged colours, here the peltae with a pair of tassels on the central point and on the interspaces between the vertices (Oliveira 2010: nr. 33A pl. LXVI 1, 2, LLXVII 1).

9. Boca do Rio (Décor I: 108, pl. 58b): undulating row of alternately inverted peltae framing the central composition, two coloured, on a dark background, with a pair of tassels on the central point (Fig. 2).

10. Boca do Rio (Décor I: 109, pl. 59a): enclosure framing the central composition, row of upright peltae facing each other in pairs across a poised square, of two alternating colours (Duran Kremer 2011: 359 fig.14) (Fig. 3).

11. Cerro da Vila (Décor I: 108 pl. 58, b): enclosure framing the centre composition, two-coloured, on a white background, with a pair of tassels on the central point (Lancha - Oliveira 2013: nr. 75 PICLXX b).

¹³ See footnote 3.

¹⁴ The mosaics from the Roman *villa* of S. Salvador have not yet been published: the photographs we have for the Inventory sheets were kindly provided by DRC Alentejo, who also gave us access to the excavation reports, and whom we thank very much for the support they have given to the "Inventory of Roman Mosaics in Portugal" project from the first moment on. Unfortunately, the technical quality of the photos does not always allow them to be published: so we will only include one or two examples necessary to document a variant of the pelta.



Figure 2
Roman *villa* of Boca do Rio, in Museum
Dr. José Formosinho (Lagos)
© Duran Kremer.

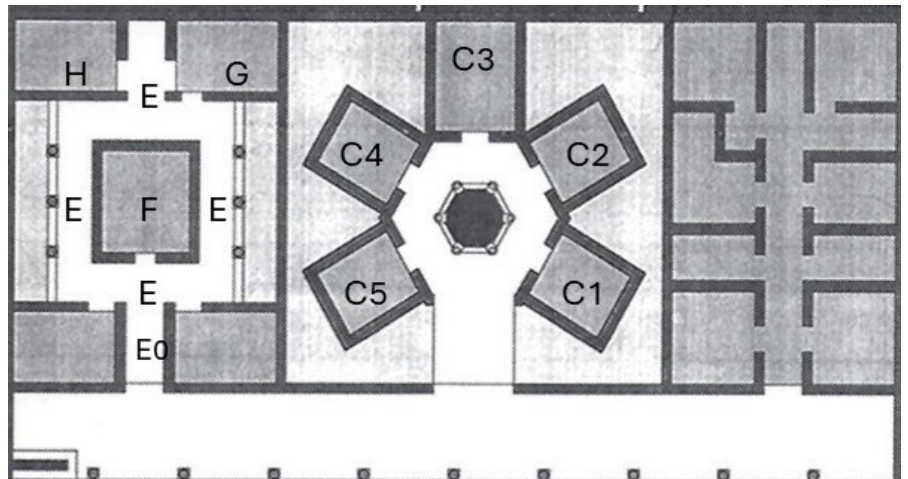


Figure 3
Roman *villa* of Boca do Rio, in Museum
Dr. José Formosinho (Lagos)
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12. Cerro da Vila, Nr. 73, undulating row of alternately inverted peltae framing the central composition, two coloured, with scrolls on the central point in counterchanging colours, on two counterchanging coloured background (Lancha - Oliveira 2013: nr. 80 pl. CLXXIX a-b).

13. Abicada, room C2¹⁵, (Décor I: pl. 59, a) enclosure inside the composition, variant of 59 a, the peltae with scrolls and the central point developed into a lily, the flower in yellow tone (Décor I: pl. 58, d). Alternates with a circle filled with a square in the corners (Duran Kremer 2008b: 221 fig. 9).

Figure 4
Revised plan of the roman *villa* of Abicada
© Duran Kremer.



14. Abicada, room C1, much destroyed, the mosaic fragments that still exist point to an enclosure probably like A 13 (C2) (Fig. 5).

Figure 5
Roman *villa* of Abicada, room C1
© Duran Kremer.



15. Abicada, room F, two coloured, with scrolls (Blanchard et al.1973: 34 fig. 329) and a poised square on the extending of the central point: they delimit a subfield with two coloured scallops flanking a field filled with superposed

¹⁵ The updating of the villa's floor plan has led to a reordering of the identification of the rooms: in the bibliography cited, room C2 appears as C4) (Fig. 4).

scales, forming half-scales, the colours counterchanged (variation of Décor I: 106, pl. 56e) (Fig. 6).



Figure 6
Roman *villa* of Abicada, room F
© Duran Kremer.

16. Braga, casa da roda (Décor I: 108, 58e), undulating row of alternately inverted peltae, with a coloured hederia leaf in the central point (Wrench 2019: 114 fig.61).

17. Santa Vitória do Ameixial, Ulisses mosaic, (Décor I: 107 57g, variation) polychrome row of swastika-peltae with a central knot, alternatively reversed (fig. MNA Ulisses mosaic, detail) (Fig. 7).



Figure 7
Ulisses mosaic (detail), Roman *villa* of
Santa Vitória do Ameixial © MNA, Lisbon.

18. Faro, mosaico do Oceano, a broken line of spindles with a line of juxtaposed tangent peltae, in two colours (Lancha - Oliveira 2013: 205 nr. 27b pl. XIII).

19. Monte de S. Salvador (Campo Maior), a line of three coloured peltae with scrolls facing outwards, joined by the extension of the outer vertices, a triangle, or a flower in the prolongation of the central point. Juxtaposed with a line of two coloured hearts, the tip of which touch the prolongation of the lines of the vertices¹⁶ (Fig. 8).

¹⁶ The photographs we show for the roman *villa* of Monte de S. Salvador were kindly provided by DGPCAL. This archaeological site has not yet been published.

Figure 8
Roman *villa* of Monte de S. Salvador
© DGC Alentejo.



B - Allover Pattern

1. Conimbriga, Casa dos Repuxos, landing of the latrine stairs: overlapping lines of black peltae on white ground (Bairrão Oleiro 1992: nr. 14 vol. I, 138, vol. II pl. 50).

2. Santiago da Guarda (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455), corridor: orthogonal pattern of quasi-tangent polychrome swastika-peltae on a white ground, a serrated triangle on the central point (Marques Pereira 2017: nr. 7 289-290 fig. 6).

3. Santiago da Guarda (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455), corridor: orthogonal pattern of quasi-tangent polychrome swastika-peltae on a white ground, a serrated triangle on the central point (Marques Pereira 2017: nr. 8, 290 fig. 7).

4. Santiago da Guarda, northwest corner of the peristyle: composition in upright peltae facing each other in pairs across a recumbent lozenge, filling the spaces outlined by a meander, alternately upright and recumbent (Marques Pereira 2017: nr. 18, 294-295 fig. 13 fig. 14).

5. Rabaçal: pairs of backed tangent peltae, which alternate horizontally and vertically (Ravara Mendes et al. 2019: room (a), 161, figs. 11, 13).

6. Póvoa de Cós, (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455), panel: orthogonal pattern of quasi-tangent black swastika-peltae on a white ground (Duran Kremer 2022: 3 fig. 3).

7. Casa da Medusa (Alter do Chão) (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455): orthogonal pattern of quasi-tangent swastika-peltae on a white ground, in three colours, a pair of tassels on the central point (António 2017: room 32, 58 figs. 30-31).

8. Casa da Medusa (Alter-do-Chão) (variant of Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 456): orthogonal pattern of swastika peltae joined together to form concave squares, which alternate horizontally and vertically (António 2019: nr. 59, 210, 2.2.1 figs. 6, 28).

9. Fonte dos Frades, (Baleizão) (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455), room C: orthogonal pattern of quasi-tangent two coloured swastika-peltae on a white ground (Duran Kremer 2017: 167 fig. 8).

10. Pisões (Beja) (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455), room 46 - panel: orthogonal pattern of pairs of black outlined peltae on white ground alternately recumbent and upright (Duran Kremer - Serra 2022: 212-214 fig. 27).

11. Pisões (Beja) (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 455); panel 45 c. The composition has two different pelt motifs, due to an old pavement repair: 1) the original pavement, with orthogonal pattern of pairs of black peltae alternately recumbent and upright, on a white ground, the central point developed into a flower in red alternately in red or yellow; 2) the ancient repairs, with just in black outlined peltae on white ground, with a serrated triangle on the central point (Duran Kremer - Serra 2022: 216-217 fig. 30).

12. Pisões (Beja) (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig.456); (Décor I: 348 pl. 223a), room 9: orthogonal pattern of quasi-tangent black outlined swastika-peltae with a central polychrome knot (Duran Kremer - Serra 2022: 202-203 fig. 15).

13. Pisões (Beja) (Décor I: 109 pl. 59b), room 9 - panel 9 A (threshold): upright black outlined peltae on white ground, facing each other across a recumbent lozenge, the peltae with scrolls (Duran Kremer - Serra 2022: 202-203 fig. 16).

14. Abicada (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig.458), room E: grid of spindle lines (two shades of red and yellow) with pelta quatrefoil at intersections (blue, two shades of grey), with inscribed circle in the intervals (two shades of grey, with a small grey and red circle and a white button in the centre) (Duran Kremer 2011: 355 fig. 3) (Fig. 9).

15. Abicada (Décor I: 107 pl. 57 f), room C 4, threshold: composition of quasi-tangent pairs of backed two coloured peltae on a white ground, alternately upright and recumbent (Fig. 10).

16. S. Pedro do Pulgão (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 457) (variation of Décor I: 359 pl 230d): polychrome pattern of quasi tangent circles and quadrilobes of peltae on white ground tangent to an inscribed square (Duran Kremer 2011: 360 fig. 19).

17. Monte de S. Salvador (Campo Maior) (Blanchard et al. 1973: 85 fig. 457) (Décor I: 359 pl 230d): polychrome pattern of quasi tangent circles and quadrilobes of peltae on white ground tangent to an inscribed square with knot, the interspaces bearing a spindle inscribed transversely (Fig. 11).

Figure 9
Roman *villa* of Abicada, room E
© Duran Kremer.



Figure 10
Roman *villa* of Abicada, room C4
© Duran Kremer.



Figure 11
Roman *villa* of Monte de S. Salvador
© DGC Alentejo.



C – As Decorative Element

1. Abicada, room H, decorating a square: polychrome pelta with volutes and extensions of the vertices into a stem on a white ground, the centre point extended into a closed flower bud (Fig. 12).



Figure 12
Roman *villa* of Abicada, room H
© Duran Kremer.

2. Abicada, room H, decorating a rectangle: tangent pair of upright grey peltae facing each other across a pair of yellow recumbents peltae, the vertices tangent (Fig. 13).



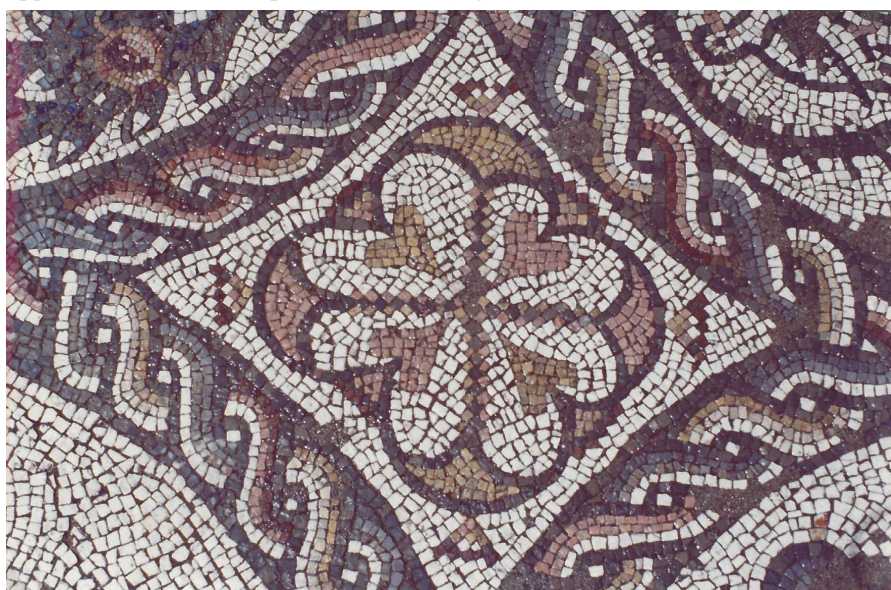
Figure 13
Roman *villa* of Abicada, room H
© Duran Kremer.

3. Abicada (or Boca do Rio?), Lagos Museum, polychrome pattern of quadrilobes of peltae on white ground tangent to an inscribed square with a swastika cross, the interspaces bearing a spindle (Duran Kremer 2011: 358 fig. 16).

4. Milreu, mosaic 52 b, pl. XCII (Lancha-Oliveira 2013) decorating a trapeze: pairs of polychromes backed upright peltae the vertices tangent and a pair of tassels at the centre points.

5. Pisões, room 9, decorating a square at the top, with concave sides: composition of pairs of upright and recumbent peltae in opposite colours, the central point extended to form a cross, the tangent vertices forming a flower on the outside, with a lanceolate leaf on the inside. On the outside of the peltaes, opposite to each centre point, a flower (Fig. 14).

Figure 14
Roman *villa* of Pisões, room 9
© Duran Kremer.



6. Pisões, peristyle, decorating a square, black outlined backed recumbent peltae (Duran Kremer - Serra 2022: fig. 11), which is repeated several times in the composition.

7. Monte de S. Salvador (Campo Maior): composition of two upright polychrome peltae, facing each other and tangent at the vertices, a flower in the circles thus drawn (Fig. 15).

Figure 15
Roman *villa* of Monte de S. Salvador
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8. Torres Novas, villa Cardilio, room H: decoration of square in the composition that borders the central carpet, half black peltae in the corners of the square, in the centre a quatrifolium (Duran Kremer 1999: fig. 8).

9. Torres Novas, villa Cardilio, peristyle, Panel B: decoration of a square with rounded corners and concave sides, two pairs of backed peltae facing outwards, in opposite colours on a white ground, the outer vertices tangent to the sides of the square, at the prolongation of the centre points a crosslet of 5 poised tesserae. Inserted in a mosaic that was initially badly destroyed but has deteriorated over the years: this figure has since disappeared completely, so that and we reproduce here only a drawing (Fig. 16).



Figure 16
Roman villa of Torres Novas (*villa Cardilio*),
Panel B © Duran Kremer.

10. Conimbriga, Casa dos Repuxos, Room of the deer hunting: decoration of squares decorating squares on the carpet at the entrance to the room, 4 half-peltae placed inside one on each side of the square, a small circle in the centre of it. In red or yellow on a white ground, alternating from square to square (Bairrão Oleiro 1992: 104, 107 pl. 37).

11. Conimbriga, mosaic of the scuta crosses: decoration of a square two pair of backed black peltae on a white ground facing outwards, a red four-petalled flower in the centre (Sales - Abraços 2019: 147-148 fig. 13).

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