

# The Muslim West | The Co-existence of Three Cultures

Religious institutions as custodians of property

There are examples of religious institutions keeping holy objects from other religions, sometimes because of their historical value, occasionally because they could be reused and often simply because of their material value. This phenomenon tells us more about the varied culture and heritage of the Muslim West.



**Name:**

Qarawiyyin Mosque

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 3rd–4th centuries / AD 9th–10th centuries Idrisid

**Details:**

Fez (Old Town), Morocco

**Justification:**

Under the Marinids, Christian bells were turned into lamps to illuminate the prayer room of the Qarawiyyin Mosque in Fez.



**Name:**

Zamora Cathedral chest

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 6th century / AD 12th century Almoravid

**Details:**

National Archaeological Museum  
Madrid, Spain

**Justification:**

This Islamic chest, now kept in Zamora Cathedral, was adapted for Christian religious use by the addition of paintings.



**Name:**

Font

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 8th–9th centuries / AD 14th–15th centuries

**Details:**

City Museum  
Lisbon, Portugal

**Justification:**

This font was taken from a demolished mosque and used in the construction of a Christian building.



**Name:**

Carpet with flowering tree motif

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 8th century / AD 14th century Nasrid

**Details:**

Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum  
Berlin, Germany

**Justification:**

This carpet was kept in a church in Tirol, Austria, until the late 19th century, possibly having arrived there from a Spanish synagogue.

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