

The Normans in Sicily | Islamicised Communities Before and After the Norman Conquest

'There is very little material evidence of Islamic rule in Sicily, consisting mainly of masonry remains.'

There is very little material evidence of the period of Islamic rule in Sicily, this term being understood to cover both the time the entire island was governed by the Kalbid amirs (who were Fatimid subjects) and the Norman conquest, during which a few areas remained in the hands of the Muslims for a limited time. In architecture, this evidence often consists of masonry remains of mosques and fortresses, usually incorporated into later structures.



Name:

Remains of the Great Mosque in Palermo inside the Chapel of the Incoronata

Dynasty:

Hegira 3rd century / AD 9th century Aghlabid

Details:

Palermo, Italy

Justification:

A number of architectural elements, possibly from an Aghlabid mosque, provide evidence of the re-use of Islamic buildings, or parts of them, in churches.



Name:

Arab Tower in the Palazzo Corvaja

Dynasty:

After Hegira 358 / AD 969 Fatimid

Details:

Taormina, Italy

Justification:

An Islamic stronghold during the conquest of Sicily, the 'Arab Tower' in the Palazzo Corvaja subsequently became the heart of the palace.



Name:

Mosque

Dynasty:

Hegira 6th century / AD 12th century Fatimid

Details:

Segesta, Italy

Justification:

The mosque at Segesta, of which only remains of the foundations have survived, dates back to the time of the Norman re-conquest. Once this Islamic enclave had been taken, the mosque was used to provide building materials for the settlement established by the local feudal lord.



Name:

Column with kufic inscription

Dynasty:

Around Hegira 5th / AD 11th century Fatimid

Details:

Regional Gallery of Sicilia, Abatellis Palace
Palermo, Italy

Justification:

Originally from an Islamic religious building (possibly a mosque) and later re-used in a church.
