The Umayyads | Christian Subjects under Umayyad Rule

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In light of the new socio-religious situation, traditions of the Christian communities underwent some changes. It was a known fact that in the religious context Islam prohibited the presence of representational imagery. Under these circumstances Christian communities deliberately defaced human and animal forms in existing churches by replacing them with a cross or some other geometric or floral motif. In some cases the design was scrambled and re-assembled. The defacement of mosaic pavements was done with the utmost care and the churches continued to be used, indicating that the iconoclasm was executed by the church or at least under its direct supervision.



Name:
A bronze Greek cross

Dynasty:
Hegira, first third of the 2nd century / AD first half of the 8th century Umayyad

Details:
Madaba Archaeological Museum
Madaba, Jordan

Justification:
A cross that was found in a church at Umm al-Rasas, and which was dated to the 2nd / 8th century by an inscription on a floor-mosaic in the church. The find provides evidence that a Christian community was active in the area during the Umayyad period.



Name:
The church at Massuh mosaic

Dynasty:
Hegira, second half of the 1st–first half of the 2nd century / AD second half of the 7th–first half of the 8th century Byzantine / post-Umayyad

Details:
Madaba Archaeological Park
Hisban, Jordan

Justification:
Most of the figures depicted in this mosaic were destroyed and replaced with floral and geometrical motifs during the Iconoclastic period.



Name:
Ma'in mosaic

Dynasty:
Hegira 100–101 / AD 719–20 Umayyad

Details:
Madaba Archaeological Park
Madaba, Jordan

Justification:
During the Iconoclastic period the figurative motifs in this mosaic were destroyed and replaced by a small tree.



Name:
Fragment of a fresco panel

Dynasty:
Hegira 6th–7th century / AD 12th–13th century Ayyubid

Details:
National Museum of Damascus
Damascus, Syria

Justification:
The representation of an angel on this fresco panel from Qara Monastery is evidence of an active Christian community in Syria during the Umayyad period.