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FRAGMENT OF A CARVED AND PAINTED WOODEN BEAM

SPAIN, CORDOBA; 2ND HALF OF 10TH CENTURY

H: 13; D: 21.5; L: 137 CM

One of the most important extant buildings erected by the Spanish Umayyads is the Great Mosque in Cordoba, from which this roof beam was taken. The mosque was expanded in the second half of the 10th century and outfitted with an enormous wooden ceiling, so that the many believers could worship without being bothered by the burning sun of Andalusia. The ceiling was supported by decorated wooden beams.

This beam was carved with a geometric border intertwined with a vegetal ornament. It is a relief on a single level in which the effect of perspective was reinforced through the use of bright colors. The entire decoration was made to be seen from a distance.

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