SAMPLE ID:
MRA-ITA-Tor001

SAMPLE TYPE:
Mosaic
(Sub-Type: fragment)

DIMENSIONS:
4.4 cm L x 2.9 cm W x 3.2 cm H

WEIGHT:
27.95 g

OTHER INFO ABOUT SAMPLE IDENTITY:
Torcello, intonaco dipinto sotto mosaico [hand-written note]

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Torcello</td>
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SITE/MONUMENT:
Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta

HISTORICAL NOTE ABOUT THE SITE/MONUMENT:
The church of Santa Maria Assunta is a church-sanctuary located in Torcello, Venice, Italy and dedicated to the Assumption of Mary. The place was originally designed to be a church and was built in the style of the palaeochristian basilica church even if not much of the original layout is left. The original church was erected in 638 after the order of the Byzantine exarch of Venice Isaac,
who wished to provide the bishop Altino. Indeed, he fled his original seat in Turicellum after the pressure of the Longobards, who invaded the territory (6th - 7th century). After the construction of the church, Turicello lived its golden age. The prosperity and favourability of the socio-political situation mirrored on the church itself, that was added some parts to the original layout. In 1008, the original church was rebuilt and dedicated to Saint Mary Assunta, under order of bishop Orso I Orseolo. Also, it was elevated to the status of cathedral church. Later in the 15th century, the city started declining and the church together with it. In 1818, the dioceses of Torcello was suppressed and the church passed to Venice. In 1986 this institution was suppressed, and the church was downgraded again to the status of church-sanctuary [1]. The floor plan of the church is longitudinal, with a narthex at the entrance and a martyrion on the left side. Made in the 11th century, it was enlarged in the 12th century. Internally, the main nave is divided into three naves with two series of arches that lead to the presbytery. The presbytery is separated from the rest of the church through an iconostasis made of a series of slender pillars on the upper story, while the lower hosts relief carvings with peacocks, lions and wooden panels with religious icons. Remarkable are the mosaics made between the 11th and the 12th, that are some of the most beautiful in the Byzantine churches in Italy, with representations of the Virgin, the Last Judgement, Christ Pantocrator and figures from the Old Testament [2].

Further reading:

CHRONOLOGICAL PERIOD (SAMPLE):
11th-12th century

PHOTOS/DOCUMENTS (PROVENANCE):

Overview of the façade of the church of Santa Maria
Assunta (Photo by Riccardo Speziari – CC-BY-SA 3.0).

View of the church interior with the vision to one of the series of arches and the iconostasis (Photo by Frassionsistematiche – CC-BY 3.0).