The churches in Byzantine and Umayyad-era Jordan and Palestine attest to a fascinating change in visual culture in their significant alterations of mosaic pavements. The tesserae of animal and human figures were removed, shuffled, and reinserted to pixelate faces and other body parts.

In the relevant field of study these phenomena have so far been summarized as ‘Iconophobia’ and too narrowly considered as damage or loss of the initial archaeological record. Instead, the manipulations and restricted recognisability even reinforce the visual and medial capacities of these images and evoke a stronger artifactual presence. These noisy surfaces have a retarding effect on perception and perpetuate the process of manufacture. This perspective holds significant potential for future archaeological research concerning the aesthetics of abstraction, the interplay of ornament and figure, text and image, order and disorder.

The FRIAS Project Group SurFace explores new methodological approaches to describe, analyze and (hope)fully understand the complexity of such multi-layered image-artifact relations.
Thursday, 31st January 2019
Albertstraße 19, 79104 Freiburg
FRIAS-Hörsaal (Alte Anatomie)

16:00  Fabian Stroth (Freiburg)
Introduction

Panel 1: Ornament - Figure
Chair: Sandro Jung (Shanghai)
16:30  Sebastian Watta (Erlangen)
Zeichen im Raum. Hierarchie und Raumheiligkeit in den kirchlichen Bodenmosaiken des Nahen Ostens
17:15  Christian Spies (Cologne)
Streitfall Ornament. Weder marginal noch universal

Keynote Lecture
18:00  Henry Maguire (Johns Hopkins)
Aniconic Designs as Content in the Seventh and Eighth-Century Mosaics of the Holy Land
19:00  Reception (FRIAS Lounge)

Friday, 1st February 2019
Albertstraße 19, 79104 Freiburg
FRIAS-Hörsaal (Alte Anatomie)

Panel 2: Contexts
Chair: Przemyslaw Marciniak (Silesia)
9:00  Robert Schick (Mainz) When did the Deliberate Damage take Place?
9:45  Daniel Reynolds (Birmingham) Contextualising Palestinian Iconoclasm
10:30  Coffee Break (FRIAS Lounge)

Panel 3: SurFaces
Chair: Johannes von Moltke (Michigan)
11:00  Basema Hamarneh (Vienna)
Iconophobia in the Ghassanid Church Complex of St Sergius in Nitl
11:45  Fabian Stroth (Freiburg)
Palimpsest und Bildrest. Zur Prägnanz von Bildmodifikationen
12:15  Final Discussion