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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Petra Al-Wu'ayra between the Crusader Era and the Middle Islamic Period - A Revision of the Excavation Chronology of the Southern Ditch

CARPUTO G.^{1*}

¹ University of Florence, Florence, Italy

*Corresponding author

Abstract

The presented study entails a review of the materials recovered from the southern ditch of the medieval castle of Wu'ayra, situated within the Petra site in Jordan. The materials under scrutiny, excavated by the University of Florence between 1989 and 1994, were associated with ceramic and metal manufacturing, offering manifold insights into the history of the site, from a Crusader castle to a Middle Islamic settlement. Recent research conducted by the author on the materials and excavation documentation has revealed that after the Ayyubid conquest of the site, the ditch was defunctionalized and repurposed as a dump for household and industrial refuse. This has enhanced the chronological understanding of the entire site, with a more precise absolute chronology. Specifically, there has been a suggestion to extend the existence of the dump to the early decades of the Mamluk period, although it was originated during the Ayyubid period. The analysis of the dump has also facilitated the observation of a production process associated with the smelting of iron minerals. All these findings shed new light on the Islamic era of Wu'ayra and on iron manufacturing in southern Bilad al-Sham, a region typically associated with copper production.

Keywords

Crusader, Ayyubid, Mamluk, Cooking pottery, Iron slags

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