



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Recreating Light: the case of the Friday Mosque of Tiberias

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Abstract

Since 2009, the Hebrew University's excavations at Tiberias' ancient city center, directed by K. Cytryn, have identified and further excavated the early Islamic Friday Mosque of this regional capital (Tabariyya of Jund al-Urdunn). Recently, this building has been brought to life through advanced virtual reality. Joinly developed by the presenters for the Israel Museum's 2024 exhibition "Lighting the Way" on light in religious spaces, the reconstruction combines archaeological findings, historical evidence, and comparative studies to represent this significant mosque, where only the foundations remain following an eleventh-century earthquake and subsequent looting.

The virtual model progresses from morning to night, capturing both natural and oil-lamp lighting, as Syrian mosques in the tenth century were, according to Al-Muqaddasi, continuously lit, even during the day. The project includes a digital recreation of a unique iron chandelier, deformed by the earthquake, as well as the chromatic effects of the mosque's colored window panes as they filter light through the space at various times of day.

This immersive experience provides a detailed visualization of the mosque's historical ambiance, fostering a deeper appreciation for the architectural and aesthetic characteristics that defined this significant early Islamic site.

Keywords

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