

Podcast Transcript

Conversations with Archaeologists and Researchers

Dr. Dan Bahat, Archaeologist and Professor, Bar-Ilan University and St. Michael's College at University of Toronto

[title screen reads: Conversations with archaeologists and researchers. Where the past meets the present and the people behind it. Fades to black.]

[Fades in to a man talking to the camera sitting in a black room. Title screen reads: Dan Bahat. Archaeologist.]

Dan Bahat: I started my career as an archaeologist, as an archaeologist of the Middle Bronze, Late Bronze early Iron Age, which is, about say, from the 2nd millennium mostly. But gradually I participated in excavations which are very famous in Israel, in Masada, which is also seen in the exhibition. Which is the classical period and I saw that they find more interesting later periods with the verification of Jerusalem.

In 1967, I started to be interested in the city, in mostly, I can say that today I am an archaeologist of Jerusalem; my field of study is Jerusalem. I published a popular book about it and now I am recording the scientific report on it and also I write a book on the topography of Jerusalem from the Muslim Conquest which is from the 7th Century to the Ottoman conquest which the 16th Century which means it's about 900 years of Jerusalem, where I describe every street in Jerusalem, how did look like in each of its periods, what was there if there was a church, what was the name of the church, if there was a mosque what was the name of the mosque and so on and so forth.

[Edit] Look with archaeology, it depends. I don't know about the new generation because the new generation as much as they talk to people they see it has a profession. For us, it is a way of life. When you are an archaeologist you must be devoted to it 24 hours. You know that archaeological excavations do not finish when you go out of the field. They finish when you are writing about it and publishing a report which is usually very difficult. They say that time-wise it is about 1:7. I mean, if you dig for one month it will take you seven months to work on it. And since I worked for 30 years, you can understand I have got to leave a lot of time to publish.

[ROM sound sting and animation]