# Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who we are</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layer 1 • Understanding the past</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The familiar story in relation to the find</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The story of the Shiloah inscription</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The past is a foreign country</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The limits of archaeological knowledge</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A variety of archaeological stories</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layer 2 • The archaeological site and the local residents</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The significance of archaeology for the residents</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When should we stop digging?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and the local residents – can the two go hand in hand</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layer 3 • Archaeology and politics</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeological interpretation and its political implications</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digging tunnels</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting “culture” as a political act</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong> Archaeology, society and politics</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Archaeological and general information about ancient Jerusalem</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(City of David)/the village of Silwan</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of Jerusalem</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of the archaeological excavations and tourist sites in ancient</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerusalem (City of David/Silwan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of Silwan – definitions and explanations</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The archaeological timeline of Ancient Jerusalem</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is who in the Village of Silwan/City of David site</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An inscription in cuneiform script on a clay slate which mentions the city Rusail-mum or Urusalimum, 14th Century BCE, El Amarna, Egypt.

bpk/ Vorderasiatisches Museum, SMB / Rosa Mai
Who we are

Emek Shaveh is an organization of archaeologists and community activists focusing on the role of archaeology in Israeli society and in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We view archaeology as a resource for building bridges and strengthening bonds between different peoples and cultures, and we see it as an important factor impacting the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Our fundamental position is that an archaeological find should not and cannot be used to prove ownership by any one nation, ethnic group or religion over a given place. We believe that the archaeological find tells a complex story which is independent of religious dictates or traditional stories, and that listening to this story and bringing it to the wider public can enrich culture and promote values of tolerance and pluralism.

The cultural wealth of the archaeological sites is an integral part of the cultural assets of this country and is the joint property of all the communities, peoples and religious groups living here. Moreover the term “archaeological site” does not only refer to excavated layers of a site but also to its present day attributes – the people living in it or near it, their culture, their daily life and their needs.

We, the members of Emek-Shaveh, are dedicated to changing the view according to which the ruins of the past as tools in the service of a national struggle. We oppose attempts to use archaeological finds to legitimize acts that harm disadvantaged communities.

We support archaeological practices that benefit the general public as a whole. We promote efforts to include the local residents living in and around a site in archaeological activities such as joint excavations and developing the site. All this can bolster an environmental conscientiousness amongst the local residents, encourage social involvement and even generate a process of real social change.
Introduction

The subject of this brochure is archaeology in the heart of Jerusalem, one of the most complex cities in the world. We will focus primarily on the mound of ancient Jerusalem, also known as the City of David, located on a ridge south of the Temple Mount, presently part of Palestinian Silwan, and will examine the relationship between archaeological research and the various interest groups active in the village and the site.

Ancient Jerusalem is a unique archaeological site of global importance for three main reasons: It is associated with the earliest habitation in Jerusalem and was the capital of the ancient Israelite kingdoms; it is located in a Palestinian village; and it is close to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif - one of the most politically and religiously sensitive places in the Middle East. All of these characteristics present great challenges to any research undertaken in the area, both from an archaeological perspective and in terms of the social and political implications of the work. In recent years, archaeology has been playing an increasingly crucial role in the political struggle in East Jerusalem in general and the site of ancient Jerusalem/the village of Silwan in particular.

The most ancient of the remains found at the site are dated to around 5000 BCE and attest to a small seasonal settlement around the Gihon spring. In approximately 3000 BCE, a small village was built on the site which was abandoned shortly afterwards.

The earliest evidence of a city is dated to approximately 1700 BCE, the Canaanite period which, in archaeological terms, is referred to as the Middle Bronze Age IIB. From that period onward, Jerusalem repeatedly expanded, contracted, and changed its character many times depending on the economic, social and political circumstances that prevailed within the city and its surroundings.

A significant number of archaeological finds attest to a large city in the 8th century BCE, which expanded towards the present day Jewish Quarter and Mount Zion. Afterwards, following the destruction of 586 BCE, the city shrank and there are almost no finds dating between the 5th to the 3rd centuries BCE.

During the first century BCE, the city expanded to the north, towards the present day Old City and Mount Zion. From then on it appears that the mound of ancient Jerusalem was continuously settled until the 11th century CE, when it was once again abandoned. In the 16th century, the village of Silwan was established east of the Kidron valley. For the last 150 years, the village has
been expanding towards the southeast ridge of ancient Jerusalem and the slopes of Mount Zion.

Today, this part of ancient Jerusalem is located in the Wadi Hilweh neighborhood of Silwan, on a slope south of the Temple Mount/Haram el Sharif, outside the Old City Walls. The site is in “East Jerusalem” – a large area which includes segments of 28 villages and neighborhoods that were annexed to the city and the State of Israel after the 1967 war. To this day, the annexation has not been recognized by the international community.

The site is now part of the “Jerusalem Walls National Park”, an area that was designated as a national park in 1974 and includes other land adjacent to the Old City. The national park as a whole is under the auspices of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, but the specific site of ancient Jerusalem (City of David) in Silwan is managed by Elad – a right wing non-governmental organization working to settle Jews in East Jerusalem. This, to the best of our knowledge, is the only national park in the country managed by a private foundation with a political ideology. Most of the national parks across the country, like Masada, Tzippori, Bet She’an, Avdat and others, are managed by the Israel Nature and Parks Authority or the local authority which has jurisdiction over the area in which the park is located. In recent years, the site has been visited by four-hundred thousand visitors per year, including tens of thousands of soldiers, university and high school students.

In our work we have identified a number of important areas of concern arising from the relationship between archaeological research and the various groups active in and around site:

▪ The role of archaeology in the creation of the historical narratives that are presented to the public and their impact on public opinion.
▪ The impact of archaeology on the community which lives in and around the archaeological-tourist sites.
▪ The way archaeology is being used to justify Jewish settlement and strengthen settlement activity in a highly disputed and sensitive area.

In the following pages we will propose an alternative role for archaeology in ancient Jerusalem. This alternative vision will address the official Israeli version of the past that is offered to the public together with the political and social problems that have arisen due to the fact that the site is being managed by a settler group with a political agenda. We will also address the methods and approaches used by the various state authorities responsible for the archaeological activity at the site.
Layer 1 • Understanding the past

Archaeological field research sets out to discover remains that were left by the people who lived in a site throughout history. A scientific excavation begins with the surface layer and proceeds down into the ground - layer after layer. Remains are not always discovered one underneath the other in a chronological order and it is not unusual for excavators to find remains dating to different periods within the same stratum.

Prior to and during an excavation the archaeologist cannot predict what will be found. It is the archaeologist’s job to ascertain when the various sections of the site were built and when they were abandoned and destroyed. Archaeologists must deduce from the finds how the site evolved, what activities took place there and the social customs of its inhabitants throughout time. The archaeologist will study the finds to see what they can reveal about the humanity of past inhabitants, their identity and their place in society.

The familiar story in relation to the find

Deciphering remains of structures and fragments of tools is not a job for the layman. The archaeologist excavating is the one responsible for interpreting the find, thereby turning the inanimate object into a meaningful story and relating it to the scientific community and the wider public.

The story told by the archaeologist is often different to the one known by the wider public and often complements it in some way. The archaeologist achieves an understanding of past cultures primarily through studying the find. The wider public, on the other hand, derives an understanding of the past from a variety of traditional narratives: Bible stories, myths, historic narratives, religious affiliation and more.

Unfortunately the archaeological analysis is less well known and frequently archaeological discussions take place far away from the public ear.

Archaeology is not an exact science and the archaeologist’s conclusions are influenced by his/her subjective opinions. Every excavator has a personal and collective identity and an agenda which shapes the focus of his/her research and conclusions. It is only natural, for example, that the discovery of an ancient synagogue will interest a Jewish researcher more than others. The archaeology of the biblical period attracts primarily researchers from a cultural background where the Bible is a central component. The researchers at the City of David/ancient Jerusalem site
which is identified with biblical Jerusalem, for example, were primarily Jews and Christians with a knowledge of religious and historical sources.

This is the reason why other explanations and narratives are offered in addition to the interpretation given by the archaeologist excavating the site, and why the former often carry more weight than the excavator’s opinion.

A responsible archaeologist will usually be aware of his/her subjectivity and make an extra effort to ensure that the story presented to the public will stick as closely as possible to the evidence which emerges from the find. When the visitor arrives at a site and stands before the archaeological remains, he/she will most likely hear an interpretation based on the find itself rather than the popular stories associated with the place. We believe that in a site like ancient Jerusalem which appeals to visitors because of its portrayal in the Bible, this practice is particularly important. In this case, it is particularly necessary to tell the story through an analysis of the finds themselves, so that the visitor may discover a story which is either somewhat different to the traditional, familiar story, or one which complements it in some way. Instead of joining a tour which sets out to confirm Biblical stories, such as the conquest of the city by King David, Hezekiah’s rebellion against the Assyrians or the actions of the prophet Jeremiah in Jerusalem before its destruction, the ideal tour would deal with daily life in the Kingdom of Judea. The visitor would hear a story which is not included in the Bible – one which tells where and how the city dwellers lived, where the ruling elite resided and which were the areas for the poor. They would learn what the archaeological finds can tell us about people’s way of life, their customs, their religious beliefs and more.

The story of the Shiloah inscription

In the 19th century, an inscription in ancient Hebrew was found on a stone tablet on the wall of the Shiloah tunnel, which carries water underneath the rock from the Gihon spring to the Shiloah pool. Called the “Shiloah inscription”, it describes the work of the people who carved the tunnel. It deals primarily with the moment when the two groups of workers who had been digging from either side of the tunnel finally met in the depths of the tunnel.

From the day the inscription was discovered, there still remain many unanswered questions. For example, when was it written? Why was it found in the depths of the tunnel and not at the entrance? Why did it not mention the name of the ruler who may
have commissioned the tunnel? Based on the script, some researchers have dated the inscription to the Hellenistic period, but the majority of scholars think it dates to the 8th century BCE, to the time of the Kings of Judea. The Bible mentions King Hezekiah as the one who dug the tunnel (Kings II, 20, 20), so, although the inscription does not mention a year or a king, it is assumed by many that the inscription was commissioned by Hezekiah or under his instructions.

If we put the Biblical story aside for a moment, however, we are privy to a unique story about a group of engineers and workers who documented their success away from the eyes of the ruler. One would assume that an inscription ordered by a ruler or king to glorify his name would have been placed at the entrance to his enterprise. The fact that the inscription is located inside the tunnel, and the absence of names, strengthens the assumption that this was an effort undertaken by a collective. The location of the inscription suggests that the workers purposefully decided not to place it at the entrance to the royal enterprise.

Studying this inscription independently of the biblical story affords a rare opportunity to learn about the ordinary people living in Jerusalem during the time of the Kingdom of Judea, a perspective that is absent from the biblical portrayal of the city, because the latter was written by a representative of the political and religious elite. That the inscription was prepared by workers, or commissioned by
them, attests to the widespread knowledge of script at the time. The Canaanite writing which gave rise to Hebrew writing was a lot easier to execute than Egyptian hieroglyphs or Mesopotamian cuneiform script. The first people who used the Alef, Bet (Hebrew letters) were Canaanite miners working for the Egyptians in the turquoise mines of the Sinai, hundreds of years before the Shiloah inscription. It is possible that this script was kept alive amongst the working class, and that the person who carved the inscription was either a worker or a professional scribe who carved the inscription on behalf of those who dug the tunnel. A responsible and faithful presentation of the facts surrounding the find can give rise to discussions of universal relevance, such as: the relationship between technology and political power, between subjects and rulers, between work and ownership. In such way, the past of Jerusalem becomes a valuable asset to our global cultural heritage.

The past as a foreign country

Present day life, the shape of society, language, style of government, technology and human understanding is very different to that which existed one hundred or two hundred years ago, and radically different to that which prevailed 2,000 to 3,000 years ago. Terms such as “nation”, “people”, “belief”, “religion” which seem so obvious and well-defined today, had a completely different meaning thousands of years ago, and some of these concepts did not even exist in those times. The term “nation”, for example, emerged in Europe only in the past few hundred years. Discussing ancient cultures like the Canaanites, or the inhabitants of Judea, in terms of nationhood is fundamentally misguided. A modern social perspective is not applicable to ancient history.

The archaeologist who studies ancient societies and cultures will never be able to fully grasp how people in ancient societies understood themselves and the world around them. If archaeologists try to explain the archaeological finds based on their own contemporary experience, the conclusions reached will inevitably be partial and selective. Archaeologists must confront this difficulty and explain it to visitors who arrive at a site expecting to hear accounts in line with modern day ideas.

Visitors to the site of ancient Jerusalem often imagine an Israelite society that believed in and prayed to one god. The archaeological finds, on the other hand, point to a heterogeneous society that worshipped multiple gods and practiced ritual sacrifice. It was a society in which every house had a female icon. The totality of perceptions, texts and affiliations of this ancient society is very
different to the monotheistic religions which prevail today. Many people find these differences difficult to understand.

**The limits of archaeological knowledge**

There is nothing more frustrating for a scholar than to face the limits of knowledge, and the need to admit that there are questions to which there are no answers. In archaeology, this limitation is manifestly clear since it is a discipline dedicated to the study of ruins, which are a product of destruction, natural disasters, desertion, secondary use of structures and a host of other factors which leave the archaeologists with only scant remains of a whole civilization.

In sites with a Mediterranean climate like ancient Jerusalem, perishable materials such as wood and fabric do not endure. Finds are usually remains of structures and fragments of clay and stone implements. These become the basis for the archaeologists’ theories about what took place in the past. An archaeologist will often reconstruct an entire building from a fragment of a wall, knowing all the while that this endeavor is based entirely on conjecture.

Archaeologists can dig for long periods of time (sometimes over several seasons and years) and yet the archaeological finds will be meager, especially when compared to the historical or biblical story that thousands of years of reciting, studying and literary composition has rendered vibrant and colorful. Thus, the archaeologist undertakes a delicate and complex task, uncovering a local story which is very different to, and sometimes completely detached from, the historical or biblical story. The discrepancy between mythical-historical figures like David and Solomon, or the description of dramatic events like Hezekiah’s rebellion against the Assyrians on the one hand, and the archaeological reality on the other, is sometimes hard to reconcile. How is it possible, for example, that in a site like ancient Jerusalem, which is so tightly bound with biblical Jerusalem, no substantial remains were found from the city of David and Solomon, the most important kings in biblical history? How could it be that amongst all the archaeological evidence found for Jerusalem from the 8th century BCE, when it was almost 10 times larger than it had been in earlier periods, there is not a single mention of a king’s name to be found on the inscriptions or structures discovered?

When archaeologists are preoccupied with such historical questions, it can become difficult for them to consider the excavation as a part of a local research project dedicated to understanding past societies and cultures, rather than individual historical figures of the past.
A variety of archaeological stories

If visitors to the site of ancient Jerusalem could hear a story which revolves around the finds discovered at the site, rather than just the biblical story, then they would have an opportunity to travel back in time without having their perspective on the past framed by a national, religious or semi-historical story. The preoccupation with the relationship between peoples and religions living in the city today and cultures existing in the city hundreds and thousands of years ago would make way for an impartial study of past cultures. The historical importance of ancient Jerusalem and its place in tradition compels us to recognize the archaeological wealth of the site which, in turn, tells us a story which is different to the historical-biblical narrative.

A. An archaeological tour of ancient Jerusalem, taking the material finds as its starting point, would tell the story of the different social classes living in the city 2,600 years ago. In this tour we would learn about a government complex that was built, one may assume, on the highest point in the city. The stepped stone structure discovered in area G, and the remains of a massive construction built on top of it, attest to the advanced engineering and organizational skills of the local rulers in approximately 1200 BCE, when the city consisted of only one fortified building, surrounded by a handful of simple structures. Likewise, we have evidence that the ruling elite in the time of the Kings of Judea also fortified themselves in a separate section of the city, away from the lower city where the common people lived. Throughout the ancient East, the ruling elite derived its legitimacy from the prevailing notion that political authority was divinely bestowed. It is likely that in this city too, the political and religious establishments where closely intertwined.

Archeological evidence for socio-economic gaps was found in the stratum of the great destruction from the late monarchical period. Interestingly, remains from the fire that destroyed the city during the Babylonian conquest of 586 BCE were found only in the section of the city inhabited by the ruling classes and the homes of the ruling elite. The findings from these sites included fragments of ivory inlaid furniture, jewelry and clay stamps from an administrative archive. By contrast, in excavations located in the lower sections of the city, at the bottom of the eastern slope, evidence was found that points to desertion prior to the year 600 BCE. This strongly suggests that Jerusalem’s decline began many years prior to its final destruction and that the common people began to desert the city once the ruling class could no longer provide for their protection and livelihood. The destruction of Jerusalem, like
other cities in the ancient world, affected the ruling classes worst of all. Perhaps common people living on the outskirts of Jerusalem continued to live their village lives, more or less unchanged under a new regime. From their point of view, perhaps it did not make much of a difference whether they were governed by the Kings of Judea or the Kings of Babylon.

B. The geographical location of ancient Jerusalem and its relation to its surroundings indicates that the first settlers decided to build a city at the southern edge of the area where the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif site is located today, on a slope which is lower than the mountains that surround it, and far from the main transportation route and fertile agricultural land. It appears that the reason for this choice is the Gihon spring, which supplies water throughout all seasons and makes it possible for a large population to inhabit the area all year round. The technological investment in collecting the water and transporting it became a symbol of power and sophistication. For those who came to live near the water source – both leaders and common people – protecting it was a vital necessity. The capacity to build walls, towers and government buildings, like the remains found in area G and E, and the structure around the spring, are a manifestation of the power and influence that a ruler could gain by virtue of his control of the water source. The subjects worked for the ruler in return for being allowed to use the spring.

C. Amongst the variety of finds from ancient Jerusalem are thousands of female figurines (mud statuettes) and fragments of figurines, as well as hundreds of whole and fragmented animal figurines. The number of figurines found in ancient Jerusalem is the highest in the area. Fragments of figurines were found in almost every structure excavated, sometimes dozens of fragments in one place. The figurines indicate the widespread worship of female figures. It is possible that the figurines were an element of the amulets used primarily by women, and that they were not part of the male religious rituals or customs. One must mention that to date no ritual altars have been found in Jerusalem. The religious finds consist only of these figurines and the inscription of the priestly blessing found in a burial site in Gethsemane. This underlines the fact that archaeology is unable to prove if and when there was a central religious ritual site in the city. The rituals from Jerusalem during the Iron Ages (Kingdom of Judea) are only partly known to us, but they certainly consisted of practices which are very different to the Jewish ritual customs from later periods, most obviously the practice of congregating at the synagogue and the reading of sacred texts.
D. Many archaeological finds from the Byzantine period were discovered at the site of ancient Jerusalem including sections of a wall, a church dating to the fifth century CE and other structures, such as private homes for the wealthy elite. A visit to the site should also include the story of Byzantine Jerusalem, which is integral to the larger story of ancient Jerusalem. In the Byzantine period, the Christian rulers invested in Jerusalem as a spiritual-religious center for the Christianized Roman world whose influence in the city is apparent to this very day.

E. Most historical accounts of the past heard by the public do not usually feature the role of women, despite the fact that there is a wealth of archaeological finds identified with women. These include, among other things, pottery, jewelry and makeup. A comprehensive archaeological story should include information about how these women lived their lives, how their lives were shaped by the structure of their homes, and more. These stories are very different to the familiar recounting of wars, kings and conquests, so often heard at the site of ancient Jerusalem.

Dozens of excavations in ancient Jerusalem have yielded thousands of fascinating finds and insights into people’s way of life throughout different periods of history: private inscriptions offer us an understanding of the inhabitants’ level of education, the weights and measures found teach us about their administrative system, other finds offer evidence about dining customs. Each one of these issues has the potential to bring visitors closer to the history of the city and particularly to the lives of the people who lived here, who were not mythical characters but real life people made of flesh and blood.

Female figurine, associated with the fertility goddess, Jerusalem 8th century BCE.
Israeli Antiquities Authority collection, photograph © Israel museum
Area E: designated as an events park
Closer view of excavation area G

Area G – Four-room house
Layer 2 • The archaeological site and the local residents

Archaeological excavations involve working in the field. Sometimes the land excavated is empty, or isolated and unclaimed and the archaeological activity leaves no traces. Other times, the land is privately owned and the excavation is merely a stage – a necessary but temporary one - in developing the land for the benefit of the property-owner. In these cases, the archaeologists' presence is temporary, and their impact on the local community minimal. However, there are times when an excavation is conducted in a public space and has an impact on a whole community.

Archaeologists who arrive in a built-up area appropriate a section of the land for their excavation. This, in turn, irreversibly alters the local landscape and sometimes even modifies its function and use. Each community is likely to react differently to excavations on its land, their response depending to a large extent on the level of their participation in the decision to host the excavation. An archaeological dig in the midst of a poor neighborhood, for example, could be perceived by the local residents as an unnecessary undertaking when compared to their pressing needs. A community which is ruled by a government that they perceive to be alien and oppressive, may associate the archaeologists with the government unless the latter act in a way which dispels this impression.

Several excavations are taking place simultaneously in the area of ancient Jerusalem/Wadi Hilweh neighborhood. The excavations in the Givati Parking lot are situated in a former lot that had hitherto served the residents of Silwan as a playground and a space for commerce. The excavation began in 2007 (a smaller scale excavation took place in 2003) and still continues in 2010. Other more long-term excavations are underway in other parts of the village, such as the excavation adjacent to the spring, which began in 1995. Another public space appropriated for archaeological excavation is located at the southern tip of the ancient Jerusalem mound/Wadi Hilweh. The dig, which began in 2004, has exposed a section of a pool from the Second Temple period (the Shiloah Pool), but, in so doing, the archeologists completely removed a path which had served the local residents as a route from the El Bustan neighborhood to the mosque in Wadi Hilweh. Closing it off was not a necessary measure. For the most part, there are simple ways to safeguard the residents’ way of life without undermining research. Regarding the Shiloah Pool, for example, the archaeologists could have kept the excavation area open to the residents and allowed them continued access to the
mosque and nurseries in Wadi Hilweh.

Although by definition the archaeologist deals with the past, and the present-day life of a village is of little professional or scientific interest, the very fact that excavations tend to go on for some time render the archaeologist part of the local landscape and the daily life of the village. Basic rules of decency dictate that archaeologists are guests of the local community. Professional ethics require them to enrich the community with their presence, and to minimize harm to the fabric of the residents’ lives to the extent that they can. A more responsible, involved and democratic approach would be to include the residents in shaping the development plans and research schedule. Such an approach would demonstrate a sensitivity to their needs, and would reassure the residents that the archaeologists will keep them informed about the various developments and latest finds.

Excavations which are accessible to the residents and not carried out behind fences, screens and a general shroud of secrecy, would strengthen the trust between them and the excavators and thus enable cooperation during the work and beyond. Moreover, an excavation team which keeps up live communication channels with the local residents could enjoy the experience of sharing their discoveries with those living closest to the excavation, and not just with scholars located in faraway research centers or universities.

In cases where the archaeological finds are preserved and incorporated into the local landscape, there are many ways they can be used to empower and strengthen the local community. The archaeological sites in Silwan could inspire the residents to become interested in history, in past cultures and even their own present-day community. The site itself could serve a variety of communal activities including participation in the actual excavations. This is routine practice everywhere else in the world but it was never tried – and dare we say, not even considered – in Wadi Hilweh.

In other archaeological sites in Israel, such as Beit She’an and Ein Hemed (close to the village Naquba), the residents who live near the national park are allowed to enter it free of charge. The site of ancient Jerusalem is located in and amongst the houses in Wadi Hilweh and it is an integral part of the village, yet the residents cannot access it free of charge. Moreover, they themselves prefer not to enter it, repelled as they are by a prevailing sense of alienation and disenfranchisement.
The significance of archaeology for the local residents

How does one go about involving local communities in archaeological endeavors and how can an archaeological site be turned into an opportunity for dialogue between the excavators and the residents?

In the multicultural society in which we live, archaeologists who dig within a built-up area will often find themselves entangled in a web of interests that are not always easy to reconcile. Most of the time they do not have full control over the future of the site they are excavating. Yet this fact does not absolve them of responsibility - both during the excavation and in its aftermath - for working with the community and finding ways to reach a common agenda.

We believe that part of the archaeologist’s role is to find ways to make the project relevant and interesting for the residents. In the Givati Parking lot at the top of the ancient Jerusalem mound, for example, remains were discovered from the early Muslim empires which could be of great interest to the Muslim community of Silwan. Underneath these layers, impressive and important remains were discovered from the Byzantine and Roman periods. Here we have a continuum of three large empires: Pagan, Christian and Muslim - with each having attempted to shape Jerusalem according to its agenda. Detailed and equal archaeological attention to each of these periods could occasion a rare opportunity for a value-based discussion with the community members around questions such as: How has the identity of the inhabitants and the city changed from one era to another? How did their life circumstances change? Which was the majority party and which the minority in each period? Who held the reigns of power?

Through creative and well-planned educational activities, archaeologists could bring the local population closer to their work and inspire a curiosity even among those residents who do not demonstrate a natural curiosity about the past. Moreover, archaeology has the potential to inspire an interest in a variety of past cultures, not only those which are associated with the current populations’ culture and religion. Finds from the Muslim periods are not exposed for the benefit of the Muslim community alone, just as the finds from the Byzantine period are not preserved just for the church. Anyone who visits the ancient Jerusalem site should be given the impression that finds from the different periods, cultures and religions do not belong to any one culture but to humanity as a whole.

The people living around the site of ancient Jerusalem are not one homogenous group. The various groups within a community
have different needs which, in turn, dictate different approaches to the site. To date there has been no inquiry into the opinions and needs of the residents of Silwan vis-à-vis the archaeological site in their midst.

It is important to learn how different groups view the site. For example, in a society such as the Palestinian community of Silwan where the woman is identified with the home and child rearing, her relationship to the public archaeological space near her home is likely to be different to that of the men in the village. We must strive to integrate archaeology into the lives of these women in order to empower them and strengthen the bonds between them and their physical and cultural environment.

**When should we stop digging?**

In a place like Silwan/ancient Jerusalem which is endowed with archaeological riches and multi-layered sites, tensions emerge between various groups and interests, such as the excavators, the developers, the desire to preserve resources for future research, and the daily lives of the local residents. The archaeological find will not disappear if it remains underground. On the contrary, the excavation itself involves planned acts of destruction. Many times archaeologists will delve into the digging process with such enthusiasm that their desire to discover finds will know no limits, and there is a need for an external source to stop the dig and say “That’s enough! We will learn from what we have already excavated and leave the rest for future generations.” A healthy relationship between the archaeologists and the local community could help determine when is a good point to stop digging.

In the triangle of developers-archaeologists-residents, it is crucial that archaeologists uphold their independence and opinions, and not turn into the actuators of a one sided policy on behalf of those who wield political influence or hold the purse strings. We believe that in Wadi Hilweh, the balance of interests has been completely shattered. The number of excavations taking place and their size (at least 2 big excavations above ground and 3 underground) as well as their location in the center of the village demonstrate that political and economic interests dictate the pace and nature of the excavations while removing the local community from the equation completely.

**Tourism and the local residents – can the two go hand in hand?**

The negative impact of tourism on the environment and the need to restrain it are issues of concern all over the world. The
Exit from area E into the Bustan neighborhood

View of Silwan from the national park

View of Silwan with the Old City in the background
The main street in Silwan. Fenced off sidewalk and excavation area adjacent to the mosque

A view of the Shiloah Pool through the bars surrounding the pool of the gate
steep rise in numbers of visitors to international tourist sites such as Venice, Barcelona, Prague, Machu Picchu and others is posing a threat to the ruins and the environment. A paradoxical situation has developed whereby tourists flock to faraway places in pursuit of the exotic but this, in turn, expedites local development to a point where the site is completely altered.

The Elad Foundation is trying, it seems, to turn the site of ancient Jerusalem into a “biblical Disneyland”. But how do the residents of Wadi Hilweh figure in such a “Disneyland”? Is there room for real people in this particular notion of tourism? How many visitors can a very crowded village, which suffers from severe neglect and welfare deficiencies, absorb?

The development works currently underway in the area around the national park in Silwan are undertaken for the purposes of tourism and not as part of a plan to benefit the local residents. A clear indication that the Jerusalem municipality has decided to promote tourism at the expense of the villagers is its plan to expropriate private land to build parking lots. This, in a village which suffers a great shortage of schools, nurseries, playgrounds and lacks a postal office, a clinic and many other services. Were the municipality really concerned with the welfare of the residents, they would have used the land to advance the needs of the villagers rather than tourism.

The Shiloah Pool, 1909
Layer 3 • Archaeology and politics

When archaeological research takes place in disputed territory, the archaeologist and his/her work inevitably become part of the conflict. This is particularly true for the excavations in Silwan in East Jerusalem because of its sensitive location at the heart of the conflict over sovereignty. While Israel sees East Jerusalem in general, and Silwan in particular, as areas which come under its sovereignty, the Palestinians and the international community view it as occupied land. Thus, archaeologists who agree to work in Silwan find themselves serving a controversial policy, their very presence there re-affirming Israeli claims to sovereignty even if they personally disagree with that view. In this way, the archaeologist’s work becomes a part of the politics at play.

The purpose of the excavation and its source of funding are two additional factors that identify the archaeologist with a certain agenda. An excavation funded by government ministries is seen to serve government interests. Excavations funded by an ideological entity are perceived to be a component of that particular group’s activities. In the City of David National Park most of the excavations, if not all, are funded by the right wing foundation, Elad, which, as mentioned earlier, strives to strengthen the Jewish connection to the city. The foundation, which works primarily in Silwan, began settling in the village in 1991, and it currently owns a few dozen residential properties there. The Elad Foundation con-
tributed funds to the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) to carry out excavations in Silwan and the IAA, in turn, sends archaeologists to excavate on its behalf. So, although the archaeologists are paid by the IAA, the Elad Foundation is the source of their funding. The fact that the Elad Foundation funds the archaeological digs and then proceeds to annex the land to the national park, means that the archaeologists are in fact identified with the organization. The excavating team is seen to be working to help realize the foundation’s goals. This association is even more pronounced if the archaeologist does not engage in dialogue with the other political players and the local residents.

Archaeological interpretation and its political implications

The archaeological finds give us insight into the qualities of a given site: when it was inhabited, who inhabited it, and more. The finds in a given excavation site are viewed as a representative sample from which we can draw conclusions about other sites in the area which have not yet been excavated. The limited excavations conducted by Charles Warren in the 19th century, for example, gave rise to the conclusion that biblical Jerusalem was located on the hill south of the Temple Mount/Haram el Sharif. Based on the biblical text, the remains at this site were associated with kings David, Solomon, Hezekiah and others. These conclusions, reached by the first archaeologists who excavated the area, identified the mount south of the Temple Mount as the “City of David”. Since the excavated site allows us to draw conclusions
about the greater area, the name “City of David” was applied to the whole mount, i.e. to areas beyond the excavation site.

Many Israelis see the remains from the Kingdom of Judea (the 10th – 6th centuries BCE) as evidence of a Jewish past. They consider the fact that the area is identified with the biblical story as proof that the Jewish people, or Israeli society, have inherited the right to take possession of the site.

The aim of scientific archaeological research, on the other hand, is to place historical processes in their temporal, social and political context. Remains from 2,500 or 4,000 years ago “belong” to those who lived here 2,500 or 4,000 years ago. It is not the archaeologists’ job to “prove” ownership or historical rights. They do not rate the cultures according to a national or moral agenda. So, when ideological groups use the archaeological finds as proof of their historic right to take possession of a given place, and at the same time to undermine the rights of the local people living there – then archaeology is in danger of losing its status as an independent field of research. When tour guides in the site of ancient Jerusalem turn it into nothing more than an illustration or backdrop for the biblical stories, without acknowledging the difference between a mythical perspective on the past and the actual archaeological finds, or when they do not acknowledge the rich remains from other cultures and societies that inhabited the place throughout time, they are feeding the tourists a distorted, nationalist version of history. By appropriating the past to serve their world-view, and ignoring the significance of the site for a wide range of peoples and cultures, and the Palestinian local residents in particular, these guides are doing a great disservice both to past and present day societies.

The extreme consequences of this approach are exemplified by recent development plans for the El Bustan neighborhood in the Kidron Valley, south of the site of ancient Jerusalem. The Palestinian residents in the neighborhood have been issued demolition orders because their homes were built without permits (like thousands of other homes in East Jerusalem). The municipality intends to turn the area into a garden inspired by an interpretation of a biblical phrase that mentions the “King’s Garden.” Several scholars have associated the location of the “King’s Garden” with the El Bustan neighborhood (“Bustan” in Arabic means garden), and this as yet unproved assumption was enough of an incentive for the municipality to make plans that will harm the local population.

From the point of view of archaeological research, the desire to “restore” the landscape to the way it was thousands of years ago, while quoting archaeological theory to legitimize such a desire,
is a serious threat. Although such endeavours may at times coincide with their professional interests, archaeologists must oppose such acts, if only to protect their discipline from being taken out of the realm of science and research and exploited for religious, political or economic ends.

For those who use history as a way of asserting control over territory, archaeology can become a very powerful political resource. The archaeological remains are part of the past and those who control them have the power to shape the story and its perceived significance. In Silwan/ancient Jerusalem, the Elad Foundation is involved in sponsoring the excavations and managing the visitors’ center. Thus, it presents itself as a custodian of both the site and its history. Yet the present day residents are excluded from the site and the story. The Foundation does not view them as the latest inhabitants in the continuum of communities who lived in the site and thus makes it seem as though their presence in the village is temporary and insignificant.

By handing over the management of the site of ancient Jerusalem to a private group with an extreme political agenda, the state has set in motion a process that has both potentially dangerous political consequences and undermines archaeology as an independent field of research. Once the management of a site is placed in the hands of an organization like the Elad Foundation, they have the power to decide which theories about the past should be highlighted and which should be hidden from the public. They have the power to establish as truth the one story or interpretation that accords with their ideological position, regardless of the political implications this may have or how this interpretation is regarded within the academic community.

The archaeological community must work hard to both counter interpretations biased by tradition or political interests, and to apply pressure on the government to take the management of the site away from the Elad foundation and put it in the hands of a more neutral government body. In terms of the public perception, archaeologists must make a clear distinction between the sense of historical pride which the finds at the site can evoke and the demand for present-day possession of the area, which ignores the presence of the Palestinian community living there. The effort to create such a distinction is crucial for freeing the science of archaeology from various interest groups and making it equally accessible and beneficial to the public as a whole regardless of religious, national and cultural differences.
Digging Tunnels

The practice of digging horizontal tunnels underground fell into disuse, and has not been considered a legitimate scientific archaeological method for over a hundred years. It was replaced by the stratigraphic method, whereby digging is carried out vertically from the surface level down into the ground. This method affords a better understanding of the archaeological finds and the different layers, and prevents unnecessary damage and destruction.

In the Old City and the site of ancient Jerusalem, archaeologists are reverting back to the practice of digging tunnels. Currently there are several tunnels being dug in Silwan – some are dug continuously, some intermittently. The excavations are taking place underneath the village and in pursuit of specific archaeological finds, such as an ancient Roman street ascending from the Shiloah pool northwards, fortification digs towards the center of the hill around the structure by the Spring, and a dig at the center of the Wadi Hilweh neighborhood, undertaken for the purpose of cleaning out an ancient drainage system.

Digging tunnels in the name of archaeological research is less vulnerable to public criticism than an excavation which is not undertaken for research purposes, because the former is justified to the public as a means to study and learn about the history of a site. Excavating tunnels in the site of ancient Jerusalem/Silwan places archaeological research at the center of the on-going territorial struggle in Jerusalem, and benefits the settlers in two ways: once because the finds they may discover increase public interest and the number of visitors to the area under their control, and secondly because it allows them to present the subterranean "biblical" story to the public in a way that is completely unrelated to the aggressive and sometimes violent struggle for control currently taking place above ground.

Supporting “culture” as a political act

Many cultural enterprises are supported by donations. The archaeologist who wants to excavate needs funding. Like every educational and cultural enterprise, the source of the funding could create a moral dilemma for the recipient: should one forfeit the donation if it becomes clear that the donor represents interests which are different to those held by the organization?

The main resource that the archaeologist can offer a donor is his or her professional standing and integrity. The donor or funding body which supports archaeological research benefits from
View of the archaeological site and the village of Silwan

View of the Weill excavations and the Meyuhas House

View to the north: The Weill excavations, Ghozalan House and contemporary village residences
National Parks and Nature Authority flag at the entrance to the visitors’ center

An underground tunnel currently excavated following the discovery of the Herodian street

Parking lots under construction in the the El Bustan neighborhood
the opportunity to present their activities as a support for culture and research for the benefit of the public at large. Providing such support boosts the image of the donor. When archaeological digs are funded by an ideological organization, the archaeologists conducting the excavations lend their professional prestige to strengthen its public image. One of the declared goals of the Elad Foundation is settling in the village of Silwan and the site of ancient Jerusalem, while simultaneously supporting the archaeological activities in the village. The Israel Antiquities Authority claims that it is using the money from the Elad Foundation only to conduct the digs. However, this liaison comes at the cost of the professional standing of the archaeologists who are conducting the digs and the national and international standing of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Illustration of a fragment of a cult stand (11th-10th century BCE), found during excavations conducted by the City of David delegation
**Conclusion: Archaeology, society and politics**

Archaeology is a study of the past in general and, specifically, the study of the material aspects of past cultures. The excavations, conclusions, publications and discoveries – all these are undertaken today by a variety of different researchers. Every research study is influenced by the prevailing attitudes of the times. In previous centuries, archaeological research was an offshoot of biblical and historical research, a fact which no doubt shaped the conclusions reached by the scholars in those times.

An awareness that archaeological research is shaped by contemporary attitudes and processes is of fundamental importance for the future of archaeology. If the science of archaeology is to preserve cultural heritage for people of all cultural and religious backgrounds, it must take into account the physical environment, the local residents and the social and political situation before, during and after an excavation. This is the only way to protect archaeological research from becoming a political tool which can harm certain groups within society while benefiting others.

In the past, it was customary to say that all the archaeologist needs is a trowel, a measuring instrument, a notebook and writing implements. Today it is clear that digging tools are only some of the tools needed by the archaeologist. Now, more than any other time, the archaeologist, in addition to archaeological tools, must have information and an awareness about the social, political and cultural aspects of the place he/she is excavating.

In places steeped in historical and political significance, the science of archaeology cannot be pursued in isolation from the contemporary context. Archaeology changes a place and affects the people who live in and around the excavation site. During an excavation and beyond, the archaeologist has a great deal of responsibility for shaping the future of the area.
Archaeological and general information about ancient Jerusalem (City of David)/the village of Silwan

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, scholars were in disagreement about the exact location of the site of ancient Jerusalem. Based on the descriptions of Josephus and pilgrims from later periods, many situated the original site on the western hill, which is Mount Zion, while others pointed to the Gihon Spring and its surroundings as a more likely place for the first settlement, despite its topographical inferiority. However, the development of the science of archaeology and continuous excavating from the 19th century till today – both official and clandestine - tipped the scales, and today there is no doubt that Jerusalem was built on the southeast section of the Temple Mount, in the area known today as Wadi Hilweh, in the village of Silwan.
1. **Silwan** - A Palestinian village near the Old City of Jerusalem, southeast of the Temple Mount/Haram el Sharif. The village, which has grown into a large residential quarter, was annexed by Israel in 1967, and its Palestinian inhabitants are considered residents, but not citizens, of Israel. About forty thousand Palestinians and four hundred Jewish settlers live in the village.
2. The Givati Parking lot - A large open lot at the northern edge of the Wadi Hilweh/City of David ridge. Salvage excavations began here in 2003 under the auspices of Elad and the Israel Antiquities Authority. At the site, which includes a section of the ridge and the eastern slope of the Tyropoeon Valley, remains of a Qaraite or Jewish residential quarter from the Abbasid period (8th-9th centuries CE) were discovered for the first time in Jerusalem as well as massive foundations of Byzantine or Late Roman structures, a large residential structure from the late Roman period (2nd-3rd centuries CE), a two-storey structure from the first century CE showing signs of destruction (perhaps from the year 70 CE), and limited earlier remains, including a Hellenistic terrace, a structure from the 8th century BCE and 9th century BCE deposits. In parts of the area, Abbasid and Byzantine structures were dismantled in order to reveal remains from the early Roman (“Second Temple”) period. Elsewhere only structures post-dating the Byzantine period were dismantled. The excavation borders previous excavations — by Crowfoot to the south and Macalister to the east. The Givati excavations are considered salvage work, ahead of development and construction of a new visitors’ center for the City of David national park.

Publications:
• R. Reich and E. Shukron, “Jerusalem, City of David, the Giv’ati Car Park”, HA 117, 2005

3. The City of David Visitors’ Center - A publicly accessible area monitored by security guards. Village residents rarely pass through this fenced-in space because it has become the hub of the national park. The area also contains several buildings still inhabited by Palestinian families.

Excavations in the visitors’ center led by Eilat Mazar between 2005-2009 on behalf of the Hebrew University, the Shalem Center and the Elad Foundation incorporated areas previously excavated by Macalister and others.

To the east lies a natural rock scarp that was buttressed by a stone revetment in antiquity in order to allow construction on the ridge. Opinions vary as to the date of this support structure, ranging from the 13th to the 10th century BCE (a 12th-11th century
date has recently gained wide acceptance). Above the foundation, fragmentary remains of large structures that abut the stepped stone buttress were found (the damage is due to the massive construction from the Roman and Byzantine periods). These remains extend beyond the excavation point northward, to an area excavated in the past by Kenyon. Associated with this layer are floors from the Iron Age I (12th - 11th centuries BCE) and a later fill containing 10th century BCE pottery that has been used to link the structure to King David. Still standing in the center of this area is the so-called House of Eusebius (Byzantine) excavated by Macalister. To the west, the artificially leveled bedrock may belong to construction that predates the Iron Age.

Publications:
- Israel Finkelstein, Ze’ev Herzog, Lily Singer-Avitz, David Ussishkin. Has King David’s Palace in Jerusalem Been Found? Tel Aviv 34:142-164.

4. Area G (as designated by the Shiloh expedition) - Excavated by Macalister (in the 1920s), Kenyon (The 1960s) and Shiloh (1978-1985), this area was designated by the British as an open antiquities site. In the center of the site are the remains of support walls and fills, topped by a stepped stone mantle that covers a large section of the excavated slope. The date of the structure is debatable, but the current tendency is to date it to the 12th century BCE and link it to the Jebusite citadel. Additional structures, dating to the Iron Age II, were inserted into the stepped stone structure (one complete structure -- the House of Ahiel — and parts of two others are visible). They were part of a steeply terraced domestic quarter, evidently inhabited by affluent families that was destroyed in the catastrophe of 586 BCE. There is disagreement as to when the structures were built; some would date the original floors in the structures to the 10th century BCE, whereas Shiloh dated them to the 9th-8th centuries BCE. To the west, the stepped structure is capped by a later fortification, probably from the Hellenistic period (the date is uncertain because the layers abutting the fortification have been removed). Shiloh exposed the remains of a Hellenistic glacis which seems to abut the base of the fortification and its two towers (the northern tower was recently dismantled).

Notable finds include the hand of a cast bronze statue in the late Canaanite style; carbonized remains of decorated wooden
furniture found in the 586 BCE destruction layer; and over fifty clay bullae, many of them inscribed with names of high officials, some of whom can be related to court officials mentioned in the Bible.

Publications:
• Y. Shiloh. Excavations at the City of David I. Jerusalem 1984

5. The Aderet Compound - Visiting groups, including those of the IDF are hosted in this settlers’ residential compound to hear lectures or participate in educational programs.

6. Kenyon excavations - The excavations took place at several locations on the southeast ridge, most of which have been backfilled. Kenyon’s final season was in 1967, as she did not wish to continue excavating under Israeli occupation.

Kathleen Kenyon’s main excavation trench extended downslope from the eastern end of Shiloh’s Area G, and continued down to the Middle Bronze and Iron Age fortifications (18th-17th and 8th centuries BCE), about a third of the way up the slope (these are still visible along the stairs leading down towards the spring).

Publications:

7. The Gihon Spring excavations - Ongoing IAA salvage and development work, begun in 1995, recently culminated in the excavation of a gallery linking the spring to Kenyon’s trench.

Charles Warren discovered the tunnels and shafts at the head of the underground water system in 1867, Vincent and Parker studied the water systems in 1911, the Shiloh expedition cleaned the systems anew and Reich and Shukron (since 1995) significantly expanded the excavation area under existing houses (including under the “Abassi” House). There is currently no access to the spring via the historic, medieval period entrance at the bottom of the slope.

The recent excavations at the source of the spring and the head of the water system show that the spring waters were first brought under control during the Middle Bronze Age (around 1700 BCE), when massive fortifications were built, a diversion pool was hewn into the rock and the horizontal section of the Warren shaft system was carved out which enabled the town dwellers to approach the spring and pool. At this time, a rock-cut channel (Channel II) diverted the spring waters southward along the valley, per-
haps toward an undiscovered reservoir. Dating the system to the Middle Bronze Age testifies to the impressive hydrological and engineering knowledge of the Canaanites. In the 8th century BCE, when Hezekiah’s tunnel was carved through the bedrock, the vertical section of Warren’s shaft was “discovered” and linked up to the earlier system.

**Publications:**

8. **The Shiloah Channel and Tunnel** (Channel II and Hezekiah’s Tunnel) - The Shiloah Channel (Channel II), partly a roofed channel and partly a rock-cut tunnel, carried water from the spring to the bottom of the Kidron valley. This channel is linked to other Canaanite remains which were discovered in the area surrounding the spring (from the 18-17th century BCE). The Shiloah Tunnel was carved during a later period (probably the 8th century BCE) and it is thought to have carried the spring water to a reservoir at the southern edge of the city, where it was possible to collect the water and use any excess to irrigate gardens. This tunnel is also known as Hezekiah’s Tunnel, based on biblical references to a pool and channel built by this king. An ancient Hebrew inscription carved in the wall of the tunnel marks the technical achievement, but does not mention the name of the king.

**Publications:**

9. **Area E** - The main area excavated by Y. Shiloh in 1978-85, on land originally purchased by Baron Edmond de Rothschild at the beginning of the twentieth century for the purpose of excavation. The central feature of this area is the north-south fortification line established in the Middle Bronze Age (18th-17th century BCE) and repaired in the 8th century BCE. At this time, the city expanded eastward beyond the wall and additional retaining walls were built to allow this extramural settlement. Judging by the houses and their contents, this was a modest neighborhood. Many houses were abandoned at the beginning of the 7th century BCE, and only a few structures were occupied at the time of the 586 BCE
destruction. This evidence of the gradual decline of the city during the 7th century BCE casts an interesting light on the events of the early 6th century BCE.

Following the destruction there was only sporadic presence on the slope – terraces, graves and a columbarium built in the 3rd-2nd centuries BCE. At present, the excavation area is largely neglected; however, the terrace at the foot of the fortifications has been landscaped and serves the Elad foundation for large open-air events. Access to the site is possible only from the Warren’s Shaft visitors area; a one-way exit leads to the recently built parking lots to the north of the El Bustan neighborhood.

Publications:

10. The Weill excavations - a parcel of land bought by Rothschild at the start of the 20th century; Weill conducted excavations in the area from 1913-1914. Today the area is fenced in and access to it is only through a gate with a buzzer that is controlled by the security guard at the Meyuchas House (a house inhabited by the settlers). During the excavations very few findings were found in situ due to an expansive Roman or Byzantine quarry across the area. Today what remains visible are primarily two large carved out chambers described in the literature as the “tombs of the Kings of the House of David” (because it is said that the Kings of Judea were buried in the City of David). However, there do not appear to be tombs here, only large storage rooms carved in the rock. A well-known finding from these excavations is the Theodotus inscription originally from a synagogue, probably from the Roman period, but its original location remains unknown.

Publications:

11. The Shiloah Pool - Until 2004, the area known today as the Shiloah pool was a public space which was used by the residents of the El Bustan neighborhood as a safe path from their homes to the mosque and the kindergarten on the other side of the pool. In 2004 following a fault in the sewage pipes, the northern section of a stone paved stepped pool was revealed and identified as the Shiloah pool from the Second Temple period. The Israel Antiquities Authority funded by the Elad foundation has been conducting an
archaeological dig at the site for several years. The area has been fenced in and nowadays entry is permitted only for a fee. The residents can no longer cross it on their way to the kindergarten or the mosque in the Wadi Hilweh neighborhood.

Publications:


12. Tunnel near the Shiloah pool - At the end of the 19th century, Bliss and Dickie exposed the remains of an ancient street from the Roman period in several locations. Nowadays, a tunnel is being dug along this ancient road beginning from the Shiloah Pool upwards towards the top of the hill. The digs are being executed by the Israeli Antiquities Authority and funded by the Elad Foundation. The Roman road is located about five to ten meters underground. The digging of tunnels contravenes archaeological practice and all ethical principles that apply to archaeological excavations. In fact it also entails the destruction of antiquities.

13. A tunnel currently being dug in Wadi Hilweh street - An excavation in the middle of the slope. The digging of a tunnel and cleaning of an ancient draining channel is underway heading in the direction of the Shiloah pool with the intention of linking up to the ancient Roman street. At the meeting point of the channel with the street it was discovered that the channel was on a higher level than the street and therefore possibly dates to a later period. The excavations of the north-south tunnel runs under the village and the homes of its residents. Much of the information regarding the dig is not available to the public or the residents.

14. The El Bustan neighborhood - The Bustan neighborhood (Bustan=garden in Arabic) is located outside the City of David archaeological site. There are scholars that identify the site with the garden of the King mentioned in the Book of Kings. In the last few years the Jerusalem municipality has issued demolition orders for many of the neighborhood houses claiming that they were built illegally and that the place is of “historical importance”. The implication is the destruction of the homes of approximately 1,000 residents. The municipality is advancing a plan to turn the place into a public space that “recreates” the King’s gardens from the
times of David and Solomon. We believe that archaeology must
benefit local residents, not threaten them. Moreover it is impos-
sible to recreate the landscape as it was 2,000 or 3,000 years ago.

15. The parking lots – In the crowded El Bustan neighborhood,
the Jerusalem municipality and the East Jerusalem Development
Company have approved roads and parking lots to be used by
all the people in the area but primarily by the visitors. The parking
lots were built in public spaces in the middle of a crowded neigh-
borhood which is in desperate need of public buildings such as
a school, kindergartens, nurseries, public parks etc. Parking lots
are also planned for the slope heading up to the Old City (Wadi
Hilweh neighborhood).

Terms

Salvage excavations: Prior to any construction, laying of infra-
structure or development in an area designated as an antiqui-
ties site, the developer must undertake a “salvage excavation”.
The purpose of such an excavation is to reveal archaeological
remains and document them before they are destroyed or cov-
ered by modern construction. By contrast, research excavations
are undertaken in order to address specific research issues at sites
that may not be in danger of destruction. A dig undertaken for
tourism development is termed salvage work, because although
some of the remains are preserved and accessible, the motive for
excavation and the methods used are often not oriented toward
research.

Occupation layer: An archaeological site is composed of super-
imposed deposits or layers. Layers containing remains of mate-
rial culture such as pottery or stone vessels, especially when they
can be related to structures, are identified as occupation layers,
i.e. strata that represent daily human activities. The term distin-
guishes it from layers of earth that piled up over this layer after it
was abandoned.

Floor: A floor that abuts a wall and does not cover it or is not cut
by it may reasonably be assumed to date to the same period as
the wall. Finds on this floor would therefore serve to date the walls
that it abuts. Finds made on, in or beneath floors are archaeolo-
gists’ main dating tools.

In situ finds: A find discovered in its original location. Often, ar-
chaeological artifact are displaced by human activity or natu-
ral processes. In order to associate an artifact with the place in
which it was found, it is necessary to confirm that it is “in situ” (in
its place). If it is not in its original place due to past events such as erosion, theft or an unsupervised excavation – the significance of the find is compromised.

Additional Literature


The archaeological timeline of ancient Jerusalem

The following is a timeline based on the main archaeological finds from the site of ancient Jerusalem. The table is divided into three columns: The first column consists of historical dates according to their archaeological nomenclature; the second column lists the main cultures of the period and the type of settlement built at the site; the third column lists the excavation areas within the site and the environs of the finds.

A map of Silwan from 1911 describing the archaeological finds discovered up until October 1910
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type of settlement and culture</th>
<th>Main excavation area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,000 BCE</td>
<td>A small settlement on the southern slope.</td>
<td>Area E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,100-2,800 BCE</td>
<td>the Early Bronze Age</td>
<td>Canaanite culture, graves, a small village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,700 BCE</td>
<td>the Middle Bronze Age</td>
<td>Canaanite city, construction of a wall and a water system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,300-1,100 BCE</td>
<td>the Early Iron Age</td>
<td>The fortification of the city acropolis, Canaanite culture. (identified in the Bible as Jebusites)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000-800 BCE</td>
<td>Iron Age II A</td>
<td>The ruling classes’ quarters and a small Israelite/Judean settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800-701 BCE</td>
<td>Iron Age II B</td>
<td>The expansion of the city northwards and westwards. The digging of the Shiloah tunnel, building a wide wall around the city, the Assyrian siege.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700-586 BCE</td>
<td>Iron Age II C</td>
<td>Gradual deterioration of the peripheral neighborhoods, the Babylonian destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-330 BCE</td>
<td>the Persian period</td>
<td>A small settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>332-63 BCE</td>
<td>the Hellenistic period</td>
<td>Beginning of the Hellenistic period, the expansion of the city during the Hashmaneian period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 BCE - 70 CE</td>
<td>the Early Roman period</td>
<td>The city expands northwards; the building of Herod’s temple on the Temple Mount and its destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-330 CE</td>
<td>the Late Roman period</td>
<td>Reconstruction of Jerusalem as a Roman city (Aelia Capitolina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event/Period</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Around 330</td>
<td>the Early Byzantine period</td>
<td>The city evolves into an important Christian center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>638</td>
<td>the beginning of the Arab period</td>
<td>Givati parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>661</td>
<td>the Umayyad Caliphate</td>
<td>Construction of palaces near the Temple Mount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750</td>
<td>the Abbasid Caliphate</td>
<td>Givati parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>969</td>
<td>the Fatimid Caliphate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1033</td>
<td></td>
<td>Earthquake – Silwan/ ancient Jerusalem is abandoned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1099</td>
<td>The Crusader Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1187</td>
<td>the Ayubic Dynasty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1250</td>
<td>the Mamluk Period</td>
<td>The Shiloah Pool, the structure near the spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1517</td>
<td>the Ottoman Period</td>
<td>The village houses in Silwan are concentrated on the eastern slopes across from ancient Jerusalem (City of David)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>The British Mandate</td>
<td>Beginning of modern construction in Wadi Hilweh (City of David)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>the Hashemite Kingdom - Jordan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Israeli rule</td>
<td>Silwan is annexed to Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who is who in the Village of Silwan/City of David site

The state of Israel
Following the six day war (1967), the villages surrounding Jerusalem were annexed to the city and came under the jurisdiction of Israeli law. The village of Silwan and the area of the national park of ancient Jerusalem are part of the area which was annexed. Even though from the point of view of international law East Jerusalem is considered to be occupied land, the State of Israel is the sovereign power in the area and has de facto governmental responsibilities. It has the power to determine the fate of its residents and their welfare, and it is the body responsible for preserving and developing the archaeological sites in Silwan.

The Ministry of Environment
Oversees the Nature and Parks Authority. The Minister for the Environment is responsible for designating national parks and nature reserve areas.

The Nature and Parks Authority
The Nature and Parks Authority is responsible for all the national parks and nature reserves, including the City of David (Jerusalem Walls) National Park. The Authority promotes the designation of areas as national parks or nature reserves. In the 1980’s, the Nature and Parks Authority transferred some of its responsibilities for the management of the national park in Silwan to the Jerusalem Municipality. In March 2005, the Nature and Parks Authority signed a contract with the Elad Foundation stipulating that the foundation would be responsible for running the park and could operate tours and initiate various touristic projects.

The Israel Lands Administration
Large sections of land in the village of Silwan belong to the Israel Lands Administration, or are managed by it, including lands and properties which have been declared “absentee properties”. Many of these properties have been handed over to the Elad Foundation.

The Jewish National Fund
The Jewish National Fund (JNF) owns some of the land and properties in Silwan, including land which was owned by Jews in 1948, as well as land transferred from the Israel Lands Administration in the framework of a land swap deal. The JNF granted the Elad Foundation the status of a protected tenant in many properties across Silwan, for example in the Meyuhas House which belonged to a Jewish family in the 19th century, and land which had been
purchased by Baron Edmond de Rothschild at the beginning of
the 20th century for the purpose of archaeological excavation.

The Housing Ministry
Some of the properties that were transferred to the Elad Founda-
tion are managed by the Housing Ministry’s Amidar company. The
Ministry of Housing is responsible for funding a private security
company which provides the settlers in East Jerusalem with 24 hour
security. The settlers initiate the expansion of settlements in East
Jerusalem and the housing ministry is forced to pay their expenses
which increase with their growing needs. In 2009 the security bud-
get for settlers in East Jerusalem came to 54 million shekels.

Ministry of Culture
The body responsible for the Israel Antiquities Authority. The Minis-
ter is responsible for appointing the Director General of the Antiq-
uities Authority.

The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA)
The body responsible for implementing the antiquities law. The IAA
carries out most of the excavations across the country. Most of
the digs are considered salvage digs, i.e. digs undertaken prior to
construction and development for the purpose of exposing and
“salvaging” archaeological finds before new construction is built
on the site. The IAA is conducting expansive salvage excavations
in the village of Silwan. Almost all the excavations in the area of
the National Park and City of David are conducted by the IAA
and are subject to its scientific supervision. The IAA also lends its
scientific endorsement to the tunnels dug underneath the village.

The Jerusalem Municipality
The village of Silwan is located within the boundaries of the Je-
rusalem Municipality. The Municipality is responsible for offering
municipal services, welfare services, education and infrastructure
to the residents of the village. The Municipality is also responsible
for implementing and enforcing the planning and construction
laws and for granting building permits in the village. In 1985, the
National Parks Authority transferred some of its responsibilities for
managing the National Park to the Jerusalem Municipality, for a
period of 20 years. In the 90’s, the Municipality, in turn, decided
to transfer its authority over the park to the Elad Foundation, but
the handover did not take place following an appeal to the Su-
preme Court. The Jerusalem Municipality initiated a zoning plan
for Silwan and allowed the Elad Foundation to participate in steer-
ing and planning meetings and even to contribute to the funding
of the planning process. The Municipality is in charge of the East
Jerusalem Development Company (Pami), which conducts many
development projects in East Jerusalem, including Silwan.

**The East Jerusalem Development Company (Pami)**

A government owned company managed by the Jerusalem Municipality and the Ministry of Tourism which is responsible for development projects in East Jerusalem. The company is responsible for the development works in the Yemin Moshe neighborhood, in many parts of the Old City and in the village of Silwan. In recent years, Pami received money from the Elad Foundation in the form of transitional loans for the purpose of carrying out works in Silwan.

**The Elad Foundation**

A foundation set up in 1986 for the purpose of strengthening the ties of the Jewish people to Jerusalem throughout the ages through tours, educational activities, settlement and publishing information material. The Foundation, which has been settling Israeli Jews in the village since 1991, is responsible for settlements in several dozen apartments, with about 400 Jewish residents. The Elad Foundation manages the City of David (Jerusalem Walls) National Park and is responsible for the tours and the information material provided at the site. The Foundation initiates many projects in Silwan, from bringing thousands of soldiers and students for tours, through construction and development projects as well as archaeological excavations. Most of the archaeological excavations in Silwan are funded by the Elad Foundation to the sum of millions of shekels.

**The Palestinian residents of the village**

Jerusalem residents, not Israeli citizens. They hold blue identity cards which, according to the residency law, entitle them to greater civil rights compared to the Palestinian residents of the West Bank. Forty-thousand Palestinians live in the village of Silwan. Most are Muslim.
Clay icon from the Execration Texts in Egypt, 20th-19th Century BCE. The city of Rosh-ramen or Roshlamem associated with the earliest mention of Jerusalem appears on the icon’s torso

© Royal Museums of Art and History – Brussels
For further information please visit the Emek Shaveh website: www.alt-arch.org

If you are interested in alternative archaeological tours, workshops, or lectures, please contact us at:

info@alt-arch.org or +972-(0)545-667299

www.alt-arch.org