

# Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 1

And I would like to bring this first panel to a close by welcoming back an old friend of the Middle East centre with Doctor Mahmoud Hawari to address the topic of new critical assessment on the archaeology and history Palestine during the early and middle Islamic periods. I hope, would you like to take.

00:00:17 Speaker 1

The stage.

00:00:18 Speaker 2

Good evening everyone.

00:00:20 Speaker 2

First of all, thank you very much, Professor Eugene Rogan for inviting us to to give us this opportunity to present our ongoing research on this fantastic.

00:00:32 Speaker 2

Project and thank you for coming this afternoon to from afar, to listen to us and the results of our research. So I'm going to talk about the early Islamic and middle Islamic periods. It's about.

00:00:52 Speaker 2

900 years.

00:00:54 Speaker 2

Which must much less than what Ratas. I can't compete with.

00:00:57

You can't compete with us.

00:01:01 Speaker 2

But but yeah, so I will try my best to to in fact summarise the results of our research on on this period. So I would like to, as I said, to summarise the work in progress on the early Islamic period, the Frankish period.

00:01:20 Speaker 2

Vanquish and a ubid period. These are the list of periods that that we have been.

00:01:26 Speaker 2

Working on and the man look period in this study, we critically addressed the archaeology and history of Palestine, relying firstly on contemporary historical sources. Secondly, on the results of archaeological research, first on contemporary historical sources and on the results of.

00:01:47 Speaker 2

Archaeological research.

00:01:48 Speaker 2

Such as Islamic archaeology has become an important source to fill the gaps in our knowledge. Many people thought that the Islamic period only historical period, relying only in historical sources. But now Islamic archaeology become an important source for our knowledge on.

00:02:08 Speaker 2

This period, but also on thousands of Arabic inscriptions and modern critical historical studies, we have also refuted a number.

00:02:21 Speaker 2

Of biased and erroneous conclusions of both Orientalist and colonialist studies. This includes refuting the theory that the Islamic conquest of the Levant and Palestine caused considerable destruction and cultural decline, and that Palestine was devoid of.

00:02:41 Speaker 2

Arabs before the conquest.

00:02:44 Speaker 2

The study shows that a phase of cultural continuity occurred from the Byzantine to the early Islamic period, which was reflected in all aspects of life and patterns of material culture. The archaeological data found in cities of Palestine, such as Jerusalem, Basant, Ovaria.

00:03:04 Speaker 2

Tiberias Ascalon Ascalon showed that following the Islamic conquest, these cities remained inhabited by their inhabitants, including Arabs, with the exception of Caesaria Caesaria.

00:03:19 Speaker 2

Cesarea the status of some cities had changed as a result of changes in the new administrative division of June of districts. For example, Jerusalem role was strengthened due to the political and religious status and it required a new sense of.

00:03:39 Speaker 2

The Holiness Besan, for example, lost its administrative importance and jabariya became the capital of John Ordon. Arambula was established as a new administrative capital of John Palestinian, replacing Cesar.

00:03:53 Speaker 2

India, in terms of rural settlement life continued and interrupted in most areas and villages flourished around the cities of Jerusalem, Chalil and in northern and western has been out of the equation archaeologically and historically, but now.

00:04:14 Speaker 2

New archaeological research shows that it was actually a very flourished area during the early Islamic period and more and more sites and rural settlements have been exposed in recent years.

00:04:28 Speaker 2

The archaeological evidence also confirmed that Palestine witnessed a new phase of widespread prosperity during the Umayyad period and its impact on the socio cultural landscape, economic life and material culture was immense. Despite the widespread destruction caused by the great earthquake of.

00:04:48 Speaker 2

749, which coincided with the overthrow of the Umayyad Caliphate by the Abbasid Revolution and the transfer of the centre of the caliphate from the masses to Baghdad. Most cities and villages in Palestine recovered during the first Abbasid.

00:05:04 Speaker 2

Period. Contrary to what has been reported in Orientalists studies, there are massive took the initiative to rebuild damaged buildings in the cities, especially in Jerusalem, Tiberia, Taparia and Visan, as Palestine came under the rule of the Fatimids.

00:05:25 Speaker 2

Who dominated trade in the eastern Mediterranean, economic life revived and cities flourished. This is confirmed by tremendous.

00:05:38 Speaker 2

Evidence by contemporary historians such as Al Makdisi, NASA Registro and by archaeological excavations in which Rich finds such as pottery, glass, metals and gold treasures were found as evidence of the development of material culture as a result of the economic and commercial prosperity.

00:05:57 Speaker 2

However, this period was punctuated by periods of instability.

00:06:03 Speaker 2

And decline as a result of internal conflicts and wars and the negative effects of natural disasters such as earthquakes and epidemics. Just to summarise this, this period of the early Islamic times, Palestine in the early Islamic period, was characterised by being multi religious.

00:06:23 Speaker 2

Multicultural and its population was a mixture of Christians, Muslims, Jews and Samaritans, in addition to Normas Bedouins.

00:06:33 Speaker 2

Palestinian cities, especially Jerusalem, where important centres of culture and scientific life, especially in the fields of jurisprudence, hadith, mysticism, philosophy and medicine, attracting leading scholars and jurists. Palestine attracted Muslim, Christian and Jewish pilgrims for possessing.

00:06:53 Speaker 2

A large number of holy sites, tombs and shrines of prophets, apostles and Saints.

00:07:00 Speaker 2

The monuments that created by the Umayyads, it represents a new style of Islamic architecture and decorative arts as manifested in the Dome of the Rock and El Aksa Mosque. The Hermitian major palace in Jericho, which innovatively incorporates Hellenistic Byzantine Sasanian.

00:07:22 Speaker 2

Architectural and new artistic elements that were not seen before. Overall, this period witnessed along Hijaz in Arabia, the emergence of the Islamic faith, the Islamic conquest, the end of nearly 1000 years of Hellenistic influence, our Mediterranean, Hellenistic.

00:07:42 Speaker 2

Influence that, which includes also the Roman and the Byzantine periods.

00:07:47 Speaker 2

And the beginning of a new era that that included changes in political, economic, social and material culture, all of which affected the socio cultural landscape and the beginning of a long process of Arabization and Islamization. Given that the Arab presence in Palestine.

00:08:07 Speaker 2

Continued for many centuries before and then after the Islamic conquest. So here I'm just going to highlight some of the.

00:08:16 Speaker 2

Models of various monuments and sites from the early Islamic period first start with Jerusalem, designed and built by an aerial view and a plan, and also the Dome of the Rock that he built.

00:08:36 Speaker 2

Sharif in the year 691/92 with this magnificent.

00:08:45 Speaker 2

Decorative arts. Here we have an example of the wall mosaics found inside. The buildings really represent the beginning of this of Islamic art using various Hellenistic, Roman and and Sasanian Iranian.

00:09:05 Speaker 2

Elements.

00:09:07 Speaker 2

You know decorative elements, but also creating it in a new form of of art I've never seen before and this is the same mosque built by Abdel Malik as well. And these are the new palaces that were excavated outside the Haramis Sharif to the South.

00:09:26 Speaker 2

West, which is called Dar Al Imara, which is a centre.

00:09:31 Speaker 2

Of the Islamic rule in the early Islamic times, from the time of of Al Walid bin Abdul Malik. And this is actually another new discovery of a marketplace. And in the excavations of Bisan dated to Hisham, even Abdul Malik, this is beautiful.

00:09:51 Speaker 2

Inscription here.

00:09:54 Speaker 2

Created in beautiful glass, last mosaic mentioning the name of Hisham that he actually sponsored the building of this beautiful marketplace in Besan and here is also some excavated village in the Napa in a in a.

00:10:12 Speaker 2

A town called Rahat in the north of the knockout, with the.

00:10:18 Speaker 2

And this is actually a site to Hisham's Palace in Jericho, which is it's a cherry on the cake of Palestinian archaeology. Really it was. Although it was excavated in the during the British Mandate, but but we continued the work there and we discovered.

00:10:38 Speaker 2

We reach really a very important discoveries inside this this palace. These are beautiful mosaic floors most beautiful in the Middle East, maybe in the.

00:10:50 Speaker 2

Uh. And so, uh. And this is actually the Stockholm decorations that kept in the OR housed in the archaeological Palestinian Palestine Archaeological Museum in Jerusalem, known now as the Rockefeller Museum. These are stucco decorations. And these are just.

00:11:09 Speaker 2

On the right is the result of American Palestinian excavations on the Hamdan Tahas directorship and on the left this aerial.

00:11:22 Speaker 2

Image is the results of a landscape acoustical survey that I conducted around the palace of of Herbert and Officer and found the the water management system including channels, aqueducts and and mill dating from the early Islamic.

00:11:42 Speaker 2

Period. And here I actually will move to the Crusader period, but let me keep it on this on this image and I will get through further with with with my introduction about the Frankish and Ayyubid.

00:12:00 Speaker 2

Palestine, which is actually it's a period that falls much in a much larger period of the Crusader wars in Biladi Isham, the Levant, lasting about two centuries, it consisted of successive invasions or crusades by Europeans.

00:12:20 Speaker 2

To establish colonies in the Crusader states in various parts of the Levant, including Palestine, under the pretext.

00:12:28 Speaker 2

Of religious motives to wrest the holy Christian places. Such activity was similar to early modern European settler colonialism in the Americas, Africa, and Australia, although this is actually 02 minutes. OK, so the establishment of a Latin.

00:12:48 Speaker 2

Kingdom of Jerusalem, marked by deep changes and the topography of political and administrative and social system of Palestine. But following Salahuddin's conquest of Jerusalem in 1187. Once again Palestine witness.

00:13:05 Speaker 2

Another process of drastic changes in various aspects of life in Palestine, including new monuments and so on. And so I will just go quickly through the the the images that I have here are these crusader castles, Belvoir and Montfort again.

00:13:26 Speaker 2

Affecting the landscape of Palestine.

00:13:30 Speaker 2

Bringing a sort of European style fortifications into the landscape of Palestine and here are another example. Although Ratas, you brought this as an example of Byzantine, but here the facade of of this church. Actually it is crusader.

00:13:49 Speaker 2

Rather than.

00:13:50 Speaker 2

Presenting and I moved to the Ayyubid period. These are various buildings in the old City of Jerusalem because most of Ayyubid and Salahadin's activity concentrated in Jerusalem and here this is the member and the mihrab of Salahuddin Khan Par Salah here. Also from the time of Salahuddin bringing new style.

00:14:11 Speaker 2

And and type of architecture and decorative arts into Palestine, into Jerusalem, the facade of Alaza mosque. This is actually dated to the AU bit times and here I move quickly to the manual period.

00:14:25 Speaker 2

Period and and say that the Mamluk period actually witnessed again very great political events in the developments that had a far reaching impact on the whole region of Western Asia. First, the number succeeded in repelling the \*\*\*\*\* invasion of Palestine at Angelots battle.

00:14:45 Speaker 2

In 1260 and 2nd, the dismantling of the Crusader state.

00:14:50 Speaker 2

And the Levant and Palestine, with the fall of AKA the last Frankish stronghold in 1291. So after after the the expulsion of the Crusades, the non looks who were actually based in in Cairo introduced the vast changes to the landscape.

00:15:10 Speaker 2

And the socioeconomic status in Palestine. So I would like to summarise by saying that Palestine during the the Mamluk period witnessed an increased process of Islamization of the cultural, social and religious landscape.

00:15:29 Speaker 2

In urban and rural areas, such process began by Salahuddin and continued later Islamic architecture and decorative arts reached the higher the the height of its prosperity and and and and and also flourished. And in in the craft industries flourished in this time.

00:15:49 Speaker 2

And final final remark.

00:15:52 Speaker 2

I know that Eugene is looking at me, so for for the history of ancient Palestine and my colleagues mentioned that, especially for the bronze and iron ages, the Bible and archaeology were weaponized by evangelical and later by Zionist archaeologists to invent.

00:16:12 Speaker 2

Ancient Israel, with the purpose of connecting it with the modern state of Israel. However, for the history of Islamic Palestine, Orientalist and Zionist archaeologists and historians created a myriad of myths to deny Palestinians their place in history as the indigenous people of Palestine.

00:16:32 Speaker 2

You have been living there 4 million. Thank you very much.