

Public Abstract

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Department:Anthropology

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Title:A DIOCLETIANIC ROMAN CASTELLUM IN ITS LOCAL CONTEXT:
A FINAL REPORT OF THE 2001 DA'JANIYA SURVEY

The Roman fort at Da'janiya is the largest and best-preserved fortification on the Roman limes between the two legionary forts at Lejjun and Udruh. The fort at Da'janiya is something of an anomaly, since at just over 100 m by 100 m; it covers over four times the extent of the typical castellum in Jordan. There has been some test excavation within the fort itself, limited to establishing the dating of the construction; but until this project there has been no survey of the area surrounding the fort.

This project was a small scale, very intensive archaeological survey around the fort. In the course of five weeks of fieldwork, 43 sites were visited and recorded, including watchtowers, roads, and agricultural sites contemporary with the fort, as well as Nabatean and lithic period sites. Other periods were represented as well, but precise dating awaits analysis of the pottery. These findings allow some limited field conclusions: the fort at Da'janiya is situated on a nearly perfectly flat plain, surrounded by extinct volcanic cones. The presence of watchtowers on these cones provides a wide area of observation and control for the fort. There are also two separate ancient roads, running north/south within the survey area. There is not an extensive settlement around the fort itself, and the fort does seem to be placed to guard the agricultural zone to the west.