

Apamea افاميا

Lattakia Governorate





FIGURE 4. Overview of Apamea and damage of cultural heritage locations.

Site Description

The main area covered is that of Apamea (also known as Afamia or Apamée). The site is included on the World Heritage Tentative List of Syria, submitted in 1999. To the west of the site is a citadel called Qa-la-at al-Madiq, which has signs of settlement activity dating back to the Bronze Age. The main city, however, is one of the largest cities built in northern Syria, covering some 400 ha. It was established at the end of the fourth century BC, and by 6 - 7 AD it had 117,000 inhabitants. It saw its heyday in the Greek-Byzantine period. The Citadel was re-fortified in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and is still an established village today. Large amounts of the city have been restored, most notably the 1,200 columns of the exceptionally long main street, which was 37.5 m wide and stretched for 1.85 km. Numerous civic and religious buildings with fine mosaics have been excavated along the original Hellenistic street plan:



“This is an outstanding urban and architectural work that speaks more than any other Roman site in the region of the great magnificence of Roman architecture in Syria at its peak (the second century of the Christian era). This well justified impression of grandeur and of beauty is confirmed by the imposing remains of 7 km of ramparts that protect the city.”⁽ⁱ⁾ This AOI also covers the Ottoman al Tawhid mosque and the museum inside a historic, sixteenth-century caravanserai in the surrounding town as well as the nearby site of Tell Jifar, both identified as being at risk.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Apamea Damage Level (Number of Heritage Locations)

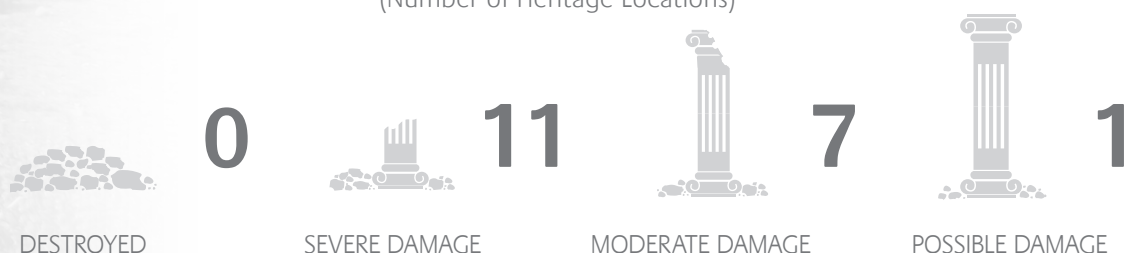




FIGURE 5. Evidence of military garrison around the former café in the centre of the site.

Researchers Casana and Panahipour also studied the site on satellite imagery from 2007, April 2012 and November 2012.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Their results demonstrated that the vast majority of looting can be dated to the first phase of the conflict, having occurred by April 2012, although it continued into November 2012. They also found that in April 2012 only a few holes had been dug into the privately owned land, though there was a considerable amount of holes outside the walls.

By November 2012, looting holes were starting to encroach into the private areas, but looting outside the walls had largely ended. By November 2013, the road that separates the private- and state-owned parts of the site were no longer visible at the northern end, and the heavy looting covered the northern section of the private arable land. In April 2012, the main part of the looted site was 170 ha, with a further 3 ha of smaller looted areas, mostly outside the walls. A review of imagery from 2013 demonstrates that looting still continues; almost another 20 ha (20,000 m²) of archaeological soil has been looted (see figure 4).

In addition, some areas have suffered significant structural damage from unknown causes. Parts of the colonnade have collapsed, and there is damage to a large section of the city wall. A military garrison is now located around the former café in the centre of the site. New buildings have been constructed around the café as well and the area has been surrounded by an earth emplacement, which covers 2 ha, and was constructed with heavy machinery from the archaeological area around it (see figures 5 and 6).

The Citadel of Qalaat al Madiq has been moderately damaged. There is evidence of shell impact along the western wall and a new road has been dug into the site. There is also evidence of the conflict in the surrounding town, and some of the structures have become military garrisons.^(iv)

There is also evidence of looting and military reinforcement at many of the surrounding sites. For example, an examination of Tell Jifar shows extensive looting of the Roman and later period areas around the tell, and a military garrison has been constructed on top.

NOTE

This report provides a detailed analysis of significant changes to the cultural heritage of this site resulting from the ongoing conflict in Syria. World View 1 and 2 satellite imagery acquired on 02 June 2008, 28 November 2013 and 06 March 2014 was used for this report.



FIGURE 6. Former café in the centre of the site.

APAMEA DAMAGE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY		
	LOCATION NAME	DAMAGE LEVEL
1	Agora, Roman Agora	Severe damage
2	Aqueduct House, Roman Villa	Severe damage
3	Atrium Church	Moderate damage
4	Baths of L. Julius Agrippa, Roman Bath	Severe damage
5	Cardo Maximus, Central Section, Roman Street	No visible damage
6	Cardo Maximus, North Section, Roman Street	Severe damage
7	Cardo Maximus, South Section, Roman Street	Severe damage
8	City Wall, East Side, Roman Wall	No visible damage
9	City Wall, West Side, Roman Wall	Severe damage
10	Eastern Cathedral	Severe damage
11	House of Consoles, Roman Villa	Moderate damage
12	House of Pilasters, Roman Villa	Moderate damage

APAMEA DAMAGE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY		
	LOCATION NAME	DAMAGE LEVEL
13	Ottoman Mosque	Possible damage
14	Qalaat Mudiq	Moderate damage
15	Round Church	Moderate damage
16	South City Gate, City Gate	No visible damage
17	Temple of Zeus Belos (Roman)	No visible damage
18	Theatre (Roman)	Moderate damage
19	Tycheion (Roman Temple)	Severe damage
20	Market, Roman Market	Severe damage
21	North City Gate, City Gate	Moderate damage
22	Northeastern Baths, Roman Baths	Severe damage
23	Nymphaeum (Roman)	No visible damage
24	Ottoman Mosque	Possible damage
25	Qalaat Mudiq	Moderate damage
26	Round Church	Moderate damage
27	South City Gate, City Gate	No visible damage
28	Temple of Zeus Belos (Roman)	No visible damage
29	Theatre (Roman)	Moderate damage
30	Tycheion (Roman Temple)	Severe damage

AGORA, TYCHEION, ROMAN MARKET

Description

These three adjacent areas are part of the civic centre of the city. One of the areas, the agora, dates back to approximately 130 AD. All three are marked by a series of foundations and several walls.

Damage Assessment

This area has been heavily looted. Large parts of the market and sections of the agora are no longer identifiable.

AQUEDUCT HOUSE

Description: Excavated structure dating back to sometime between the fourth century BC and the sixth century AD.

Damage Assessment: This area has been heavily looted to the extent that some walls are no longer visible, as has the structure directly south of it.

BATHS OF L. JULIUS AGRIPPA

Description: Excavated bath house constructed in 116 AD.

Damage Assessment: This area has been heavily looted to the extent that some walls are no longer visible, as has the structure directly south of it.

EASTERN CATHEDRAL

Description: This sixth-century Christian construction was built on the site of an earlier pagan temple. It is believed to have contained relics of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Damage Assessment: Heavy looting surrounds this building and there are many holes—possibly from looting—within it.

NORTH-EASTERN BATHS

Description: Roman baths with hot and cold bath halls dating back to 117 AD.

Damage Assessment: This area has been heavily looted to the extent that some walls are no longer visible and the roof has been removed.

NYMPHAEUM

Description: A public water fountain that was decorated with statues, probably dating to the late-second century AD.

Damage Assessment: This area has been heavily looted. Some walls are no longer visible.

CARDO MAXIMUS (SOUTHERN SECTION)

Description

Built on the line of an original Greek street (fourth century BC), this southern section of the colonnaded main street dates between 161 - 80 AD.

Damage Assessment

A section of columns, approximately 17 m long, have collapsed. The remains of the collapsed columns are visible.



FIGURE 7. Cardo Maximus in Apamea. c.23m of colonnade has collapsed. The rubble is visible to the right of the row where the collapse occurred.

CITY WALLS

Description

The town was surrounded by 6.5 km of walls; those on the north and west sides are particularly well preserved. The bases date back to approximately 100 BC, but they were rebuilt and bastions (small turrets) were added in the sixth century AD.

Damage Assessment

There has been severe damage to the bastions along approximately 390 m of the western side of the wall. In total, 11 bastions appear to be damaged with the most visible damage seen on the roofs. Debris is also visible surrounding some of the bastions.

CARDO MAXIMUS (NORTHERN SECTION)

Description

Built on the line of an original Greek street (fourth century BC), this northern section of the colonnaded main street partially dates to approximately 117 AD and partially between 161 - 80 AD.

Damage Assessment

A section of columns, approximately 23 m long, have collapsed (see figures 7 and 8). The remains of the collapsed columns are visible.



FIGURE 8. The colonnade.

Destroyed



FIGURE 9. Tell Jifar – Military emplacement, new looting holes, smoothed over looting holes at the base of the tell, and earlier looting holes from 2008.

TELL JIFAR

Description

The site contains a high mound (tell) which dates back to the Bronze and Iron Ages, as well as a surrounding Hellenistic, Roman and Islamic settlement, which is largely buried.

Damage Assessment

Looting in this area has clearly been a problem for some time. For instance, the 2008 image reveals the lower surrounding town was already looted previously. Holes are visible covering an area of approximately 2.5 ha. The looting also increased; by November 2013, the expanded looted area was approximately 3.1 ha, covering new areas, with some of the old looting holes no longer visible. However, the looting appears to have mostly stopped, as a few of the holes are still sharply defined, and most are smaller indicating many are not fresh. In addition, a military garrison has been built on top of the tell. The road to the summit has been widened, with a raised embankment excavated by heavy machinery along parts of it, together with a raised embankment around the edges of the summit, and a semi-circular emplacement within that on the southern end of the summit. These have been created from and are in archaeological soil. Furthermore, the vibrations caused by heavy traffic are likely to cause damage to the unexcavated remains (see figures 9 and 10).

A comparison to the analysis conducted by Casana and Panahipour [2], which looked at imagery from 03 April 2012, reveals some key changes to the site during the conflict. They demonstrated that looting increased concurrently with the known looting at Apamea at that time, covering several new areas that were previously undug in their first images (2003 and 2007) and in the 2008 World View image analysed. The military garrison was present, but not as well developed, and the semi-circular emplacement was on the northern end of the summit. Tents were visible among the looted area. In addition, a new track was present, which ran from the road to the north of the site, around the northeast of the tell to the summit.

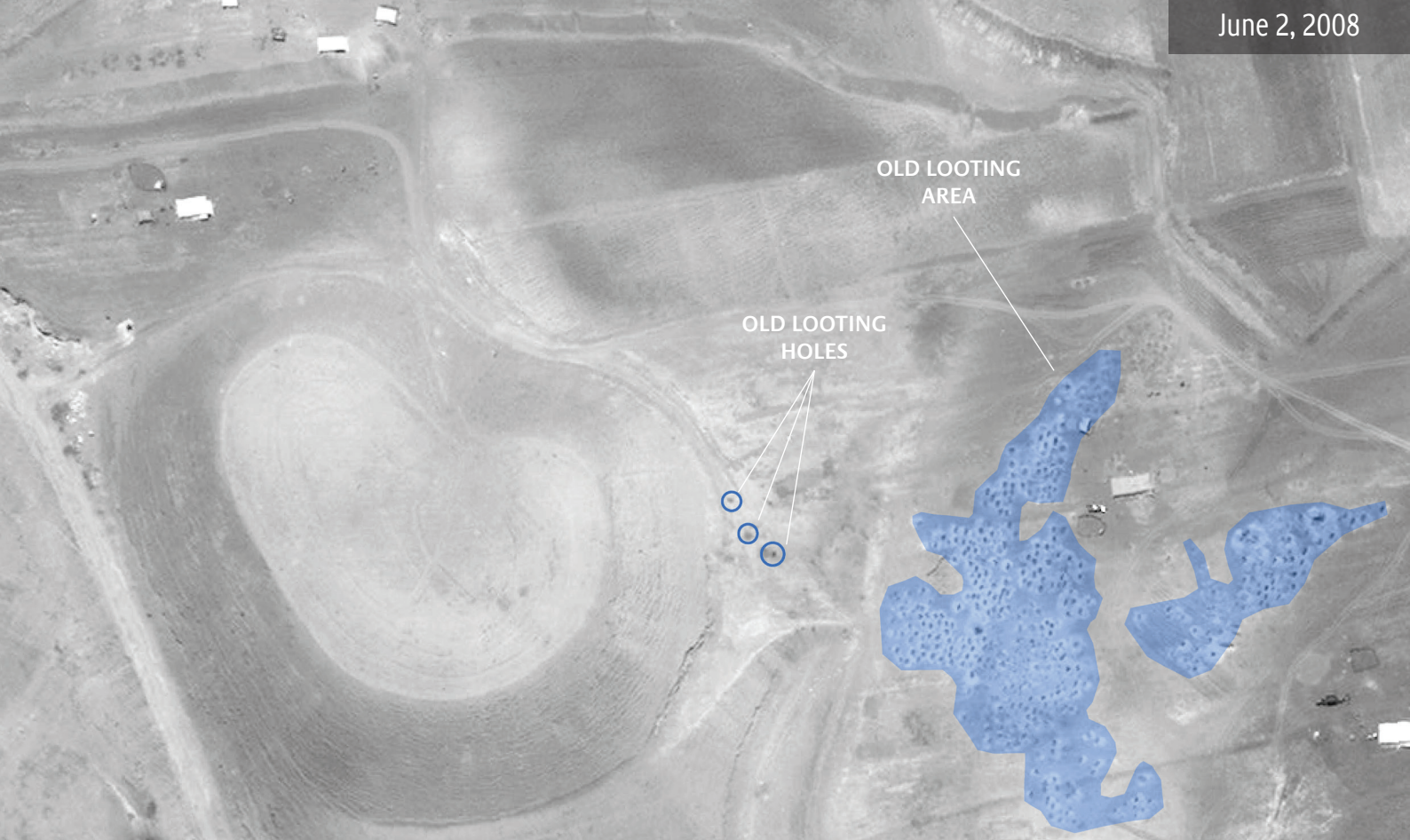



FIGURE 10. Tell Jifar - looting holes from 2008.

 Visible looting holes

By November 2013, the imagery demonstrated that the track was no longer present. Furthermore, many of the looted areas, several of which were around the base of the tell, have been filled in using heavy machinery and all military presence is concentrated on the tell summit. The smaller military emplacement/enclosure has been smoothed over and a new one created, damaging the site further.

While the analysis covers only these two sites in this area, Casana and Panahipour found similar results at Tell Qarqur, 35 km south of Apamea, and noted, “The kinds of damage illustrated above are quite widespread in recent satellite imagery from the region surrounding Apamea with numerous small sites garrisoned by regime forces, including Tell Baqalou, Tell Houash, Tell Braïdj, and Tell Zajrit and several others subjected to intense looting including Tell Sheikh Sultan, Tell Sabla and Er-Rubba.” Only the damage at Er-Rubba predated the conflict.^(v)

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Severe Damage

ATRIUM CHURCH

Description

This was a fourth-century AD synagogue, which was renovated in the fifth century and expanded between 527 - 65 AD. It was thought to house the remains of two saints.

Damage Assessment

The remains of the church appear largely undisturbed on the imagery; the walls are still clear and there are a few looting holes within the building, as well as many around it.

ROUND CHURCH

Description

Only the foundations remain of this church, which dates back to the reign of Justinian (527- 65 AD).

Damage Assessment

The remains of the church appear largely undisturbed on the imagery; the walls are still clearly visible and there are a few looting holes within the building, as well as many around it.

HOUSE OF PILASTERS & CONSOLES

Description - These are partially reconstructed Roman houses dating to some point between the first and sixth centuries AD.

Damage Assessment - Severe looting surrounds this area, but only a few looting holes are visible within it.

NORTH CITY GATE

Description - Second-century AD Triumphal Arch and Gate into the city.

Damage Assessment - Severe looting surrounds this area, but only a few looting holes are visible within it.

THEATRE

Description

Theatre, possibly dating to the late-second century AD. While little is left today due to centuries of stone robbing, it was once one of the largest theatres in the Roman world.

Damage Assessment

The theatre is largely undisturbed, but there are two new small excavations on the north-eastern corner, measuring approximately 140 m² in area.

QALAAT AL-MADIQ

Description

There have been settlements on this hill for at least 5,000 years. It was originally a Greek citadel, and the Greek fortifications can be seen at the bottom courses of the stone walls, which encircle the modern village. Later phases of Roman and Arab restorations are also visible in the stonework.

Damage Assessment

The main gateway on the east side has been heavily damaged, as have the eastern walls. Many of the structures on this side, some of which are historic, have sustained structural damage. This damage occurred between April 2012 and January 2014.^(vi) A new track has been dug to encircle most of the tell, measuring approximately 800 m in length, and dating back to early April 2012.^(vii)

MOSQUE AL TAWHID

Description

Sixteenth-century Ottoman Mosque.

Damage Assessment

A small, light-coloured area is visible on the roof; this could be evidence of a repair to the roof, needed as a result of damage.^(viii)



Possible Damage

(i) UNESCO Tentative World Heritage Inscription for Apamée (Afamia) [1] (Translation E. Cunliffe)

(ii) Casana, J., and Panahipour, M. 2014. Satellite-Based Monitoring of Looting and Damage to Archaeological Sites in Syria. *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies* 2 (2), P128-151

(iii) Casana, J., and Panahipour, M. 2014. Satellite-Based Monitoring of Looting and Damage to Archaeological Sites in Syria. *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies* 2 (2), P128-151

(iv) A series of photographs of the damage described in this overview, and of some of the looted items, can be seen here [3], shared by the The Association for the Protection of Syrian Archaeology

(v) Casana and Panahipour 2014: 135 [1]

(vi) The earliest videos of shelling to the walls of Qalaat al-Madiq were released in January 2012 – for example, by Zia Deeb [4] or Sham News Network [5]. Many others followed. According to news reports, “Local activists said regime forces carried out the assault and afterward moved tanks into the hilltop castle. Later footage showed bulldozers knocking through part of the walls to create an entrance.” (FOX News, 2012) [6] After April 2012, few videos were released of further damage to the citadel, although they have not ceased completely. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lu2_wjpHE8s&feature=youtu.be, and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdqRIPGqYBU&feature=youtu.be>, and <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/05/01/syria-cultural-treasures-latest-uprising-victim/>

(vii) The creation of the track can be seen in this video [7], dated 05 April 2012, and once complete here [8]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0mUcftgtsIU&feature=share>, and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70flC2k3_uA&feature=youtu.be

(viii) The mosque was shelled in March 2012, as seen in this video [9], and also described here [10]. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m17tXjxd-9s&feature=youtu.be>, and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecXeUWbWeU&feature=share>.