‘Ain Ghazal

Introduction

‘Ain Ghazal is a 30 acre site located along the Zarqa River at the edge of the dry-farming zone. It is the largest known Neolithic site and was inhabited for 2000 years through four stages (Middle Pre-Pottery Neolithic B through the Yarmukian period); it demonstrates cultural innovations, social organization, religious symbols and architecture, and architectural changes.

The site was discovered in 1974 when road construction uncovered the settlement. The site was excavated and surveyed for six seasons, from 1982 to 1985 and in 1988-1989, under the direction of Gary Rollefson. Although very little of what was excavated remains visible today (there was hope that the site would be preserved for tourism, but this has not be done), a few Neolithic houses illustrate some of the architectural history of the site.