

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE EIGHTH (2012) SEASON OF EXCAVATION BY 'LA SAPIENZA' UNIVERSITY OF ROME AT KHIRBAT AL-BATRĀWĪ (UPPER WĀDĪ AZ-ZARQĀ')

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1. Introduction

The eighth season (2012) of archaeological investigation and restoration at the Early Bronze Age site of Khirbat al-Batrāwī (32°05'218" N, 36°04'237" E), a major EB II - III fortified centre in the upper Wādī az-Zarqā' (Nigro 2011, 2012a; Nigro ed. 2012; Nigro and Sala 2010,

2011, 2012), was carried out under the aegis of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan between 13 May and 14 June 2012 (**Fig. 1**)¹. Financial support was provided by 'La Sapienza' University of Rome², the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs³ and the Italian Ministry of University and Scientific Research.



1. General view of the site of Khirbat al-Batrāwī, with the EB II-III triple line of fortifications, the EB II city-gate and the EB IIIB Palace erected inside the Main City-Wall, from north.

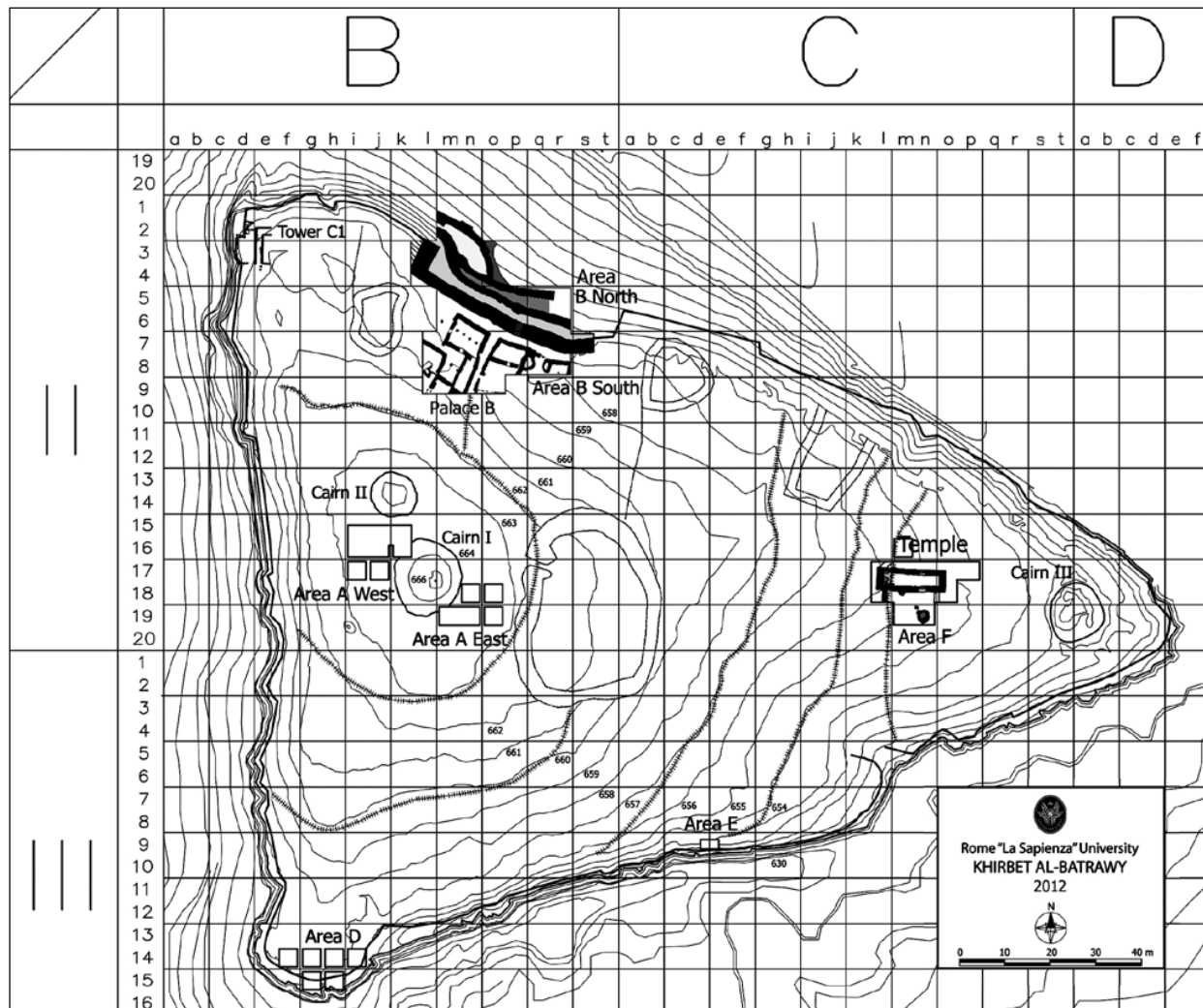
1. The 'La Sapienza' University of Rome team during the eighth (2012) season included: L. Nigro, Director; M. Sala, Field Director; L. Caiafa, E. Casadei, C. Ficaccavento, D. Ghigi, V. Pierini, M. Tamburrini, G. Tucci, P. Vitolo and S. Tricoli (restorer). The representative of the Department of Antiquities, who gave helpful collaboration to the project in the field, was Inspector Romil Gharib.
2. The project expresses its grateful thanks to all personnel of the DoA for their invaluable support, as well as to the Academic Authorities of 'La Sapienza' University

- of Rome, the Rector, Prof. Luigi Frati, the Dean of the Faculty of Human Sciences, Prof. Roberto Nicolai, and the Director of the Department of Sciences of Antiquity, Prof. E. Lippolis, who strongly supported the project.
3. The authors would also like to thank the Italian Embassy in Amman, in the persons of HE Francesco Fransoni, former Ambassador of Italy, and HE Patrizio Fondi, current Ambassador of Italy, and Dr Natalia Sanginiti and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Directorate General for the Promotion of the Country System (DGSP), Office VI.

During the eighth season⁴, archaeological investigations and restoration works were focused on the northern side of the site and were carried out in two areas, respectively located outside (Area B North) and inside (Area B South) the EB II - III Main City Wall.

Activity focused on the excavation and res-

toration of the EB II - III multiple fortification line on the northern slope of the *khirbat* (in Area B North) and on the excavation and restoration of the wide palatial building erected in EB III B inside it (in Area B South), known as Palace B (the ‘Palace of the Copper Axes’; Nigro 2010) (Fig. 2).



2. Topographic map of Khirbat al-Batrāwī with the areas and main monuments excavated in seasons 2005-2012.

4. In previous seasons (2005 - 2009; Nigro ed. 2006, 2008, 2012; Nigro and Sala 2010) the main topographical and architectural features of the site were surveyed and seven areas were opened: (1) on the Acropolis (Area A), where parts of both the EB IVB village, and buildings and storage facilities of the EB III B city were unearthed (Nigro ed. 2006: 63-116, 2008: 9-36); (2) on the northern slope (Area B North), where the monumental EB II - III B fortification system, consisting of multiple defensive lines, was investigated (Nigro ed. 2006: 175-196, 2008: 65-104, 2012: 13-54); (3) inside it (Area B South), where EB II - III B deposits and structures, and parts of the EB IVB village were excavated (Nigro ed. 2008: 127-176, 2012: 145-210); (4) - (5) in the north-

western and south-western corners (respectively Area C and Area D), where the massive angular bastions of the Main City Wall were identified (Nigro ed. 2006: 25-27, 32-33, 2008: 241-244); (6) on the southern side (Area E), where the earliest EB II City Wall and related deposits were investigated (Nigro ed. 2008: 245-255); (7) on the easternmost terrace of the *khirbat* (Area F), where the EB II - III city temple was brought to light (Nigro ed. 2008: 276-293). After the discovery of the EB III B Palace in Area B South in 2009, the last two years have focused on the exploration and restoration of the Palace itself, and its finds (Nigro 2010; Nigro and Sala 2011; 2012).

2. Aims of the Eighth Season (2012)

The eighth season (2012) of archaeological investigation and restoration at Khirbat al-Batrāwī had the following goals:

- a. Excavation of the northern EB II - III multiple line of fortifications, with associated defensive bastions and towers, in Area B North;
- b. Excavation of the EB IVB village on the northern side of the site, in Area B South;
- c. Continuation of excavation in the Western Pavilion of EB IIIB Palace B, discovered in the 2009 - 2011 seasons in Area B South, namely:
 - 1) Completion of excavation of Hall L.1110 and destruction layer F.1128;
 - 2) Excavation of yard L.1100, west of Pillared Hall L.1040;
 - 3) Excavation of room L.1250 with destruction layer F.1248 (west of Hall L.1110);
 - 4) Excavation of L.1230 with destruction layer F.1238 (south of L.1250);
- d. Resuming work in the Eastern Pavilion of EB IIIB Palace B, investigated in the 2006 - 2009 seasons in Area B South, by excavating southern yard L.1046 with destruction layer F.1154;
- e. Continuation of restoration work in the Western Pavilion of Palace B, namely:
 - 1) Completion of the restoration of Hall L.1110 and Storeroom L.1120;
 - 2) Starting restoration in room L.1250;
- f. Continuation of restoration of the western stretch of the EB II - III Main City Wall in Area B North, especially the area associated with pit P.819;

- h. Restoration of EB III Outer Wall W.155 towards the west.

3. Area B North: the Early Bronze II - III fortification system

The investigation of the monumental EB II - III fortification system resumed in 2012 (**Fig. 3**), exposing a series of terraced city walls erected on the northern slope of the hill as a composite fortification system, increasingly strengthening the defence of the site in the main gate area up to a maximum width of 16 m.

Further exploration of the EB II - III triple fortification system was carried out by expanding the excavation area towards the west, including squares BIII4 (eastern half) + BmII4 + BIII3 (eastern half) + BmII3 and, to the north, squares BmII2 + BnII2.

The exposure of the EB II - III Main City Wall and that of EB IIIA - B Outer Wall W.155 (after its sharp turn northwards in association with Buttress W.825) continued towards the west while, to the north, Exterior Wall W.827, which ran parallel with the Outer Wall on the lowest terrace of the defence system, was unearthed.

3.1. Stratigraphy of Area B North

During the 2012 excavations, the five stratigraphic phases established in previous seasons⁵ were further investigated, from the uppermost layer of abandonment (Phase 1), to the earliest phase that illustrates the foundation of the defensive system during EB II (Phase 5). Excavations in 2012 allowed extensive excavation of



3. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Area B North: the stretch of the fortifications excavated in season 2012, with Tower T.830 abutting from the Inner Main City-Wall, from east.

5. For previous stratigraphy in Area B North see Nigro and

Sala 2010: 238-240; Nigro ed. 2012, 14-30.

deposits related to the final destruction of EB IIIB, as well as superimposed layers associated with the use and destruction of each major building phase of the multiple EB II - III fortification system.

Phase 1 (topsoil) represents the long period of abandonment of the site after the end of the Early Bronze Age, during which a 10 - 30 cm-thick deposit accumulated over the remains of the EBA fortifications.

Under the topsoil, Phase 2 corresponds with a partial reutilization of the collapsed EB II - III fortification works, consisting of a stone embankment (W.811) aimed at regularizing the slope and sustaining the EB IVB village built on the top of it.

Phase 3 is the latest stage of the EBA defensive system. Three activities were distinguished (from top to bottom): (1) Activity 3a, the definitive abandonment of the EBA fortifications and their collapse, including the breach opened by pit P.819 in the outer face of the EB II - III Main City-Wall; (2) Activity 3b, a destruction layer with ash, charcoal and carbonised beams, which marks the end of the life of the EB IIIB city, excavated both in between the Main City Wall and Outer Wall W.155 (F.834), between Outer Wall W.155 and Exterior Wall W.827 (in rhomboidal court L.824 / F.832), and against the northern face of the latter; (3) Activity 3c, the latest reconstruction and use of the *Batrāwī* fortifications, including a refurbishment of the EB II - III Main City Wall and Outer Wall W.155 (kept in use from the previous phase), and a further enlargement of the defensive system with additional outer lines of fortification: Scarp Wall W.165 with Transverse Wall W.177 to the east and Exterior Wall W.827 to the west.

Phase 4 includes layers and structures associated with the EB IIIA defensive system; two different activities were distinguished: (1) Activity 4a, the destruction which marks the end of the EB IIIA city, excavated between the Main City Wall and Outer Wall W.155 (F.839), and north of the latter (F.820); (2) Activity 4b, including the refurbishment of the EB II - III Main City Wall (with the blocking of Phase 5 city gate), the erection of Outer Wall W.155 with annexed curvilinear Outwork W.185, and the repair of the outer street running along the Main City Wall.

Phase 5, which corresponds to the establish-

ment of the city in EB II, includes: (1) Activity 5a, the collapse marking the end of the first city, illustrated by a layer of compact yellowish-grey soil with limestone chips and fragmentary mudbricks; (2) Activity 5b, the erection of the earliest Main City Wall, with City Gate L.160 and plastered street L.144, lying directly on the bedrock.

3.2. *The Main City Wall and Great Northern Bastion (Tower T.830) of *Batrāwī* Period II - III (Early Bronze II - III)*

The Main City Wall, a 2.9 - 3.2 m-wide stone wall founded directly on the bedrock and which supported a mudbrick superstructure up to 4 m high, was exposed for a further stretch of 6 m in squares BmII4 (western half) and BIII4 (eastern half). Its outer face had partly collapsed in antiquity (P.819), but towards the edge of the excavation area, it was again preserved on the edge of the hill at an elevation of 658.72 m asl. Also along this stretch, large limestone blocks formed the battering foot of the structure, firmly anchoring it to the bedrock.

In square BmII3 (associated with the distinct turn to the north of Outer Wall W.155), a monumental rectangular structure was uncovered built up against the outer face of the Main City Wall. The latter was a massive tower (T.830), designated the Great Northern Bastion, constructed of huge limestone boulders (around 0.5 m high), especially in its lower stone courses (**Fig. 3**). It perpendicularly abutted the Main City Wall, extending out 5.5 m in a north-easterly direction. Its eastern (W.835) and northern (W.837) walls were 1.65 m wide and had a preserved height of more than 1.5 m. The Great Northern Bastion was erected on the upper terrace of the fortifications, with the aim of protecting the Main Gate of the city, located to its west. The rectangular plan of this device is a common feature of defensive architecture in the EB II - III Southern Levant.

3.3. *The Double Fortification Line of *Batrāwī* Period IIIa (Early Bronze IIIa): reconstruction of the Main City Wall and erection of Outer Wall W.155*

On the northern slope, i.e. the most exposed side of the site, the defensive system was reinforced at the beginning of EB IIIA with the ad-

dition of a 1.6 - 2 m-wide Outer Wall (W.155) about 1.7 m from the Main City Wall and running parallel to it, thereby doubling the line of fortifications⁶. The addition of outer walls at the beginning of EB III, i.e. the doubling and thickening of the defensive systems, is a feature common to several South Levantine sites. At Khirbat al-Batrāwī (as at Tell Ta'annek and et-Tell)⁷, the addition only involved the more exposed (northern) side of the site, while on the western and southern flanks the steep cliffs provided a natural defence to the hill.

Outer Wall W.155 stood on the middle terrace of fortifications and was characterized by a battering outer face of polygonal boulders (laid in superimposed, intermingled courses), preserved to a height of 2.7 m, with a fill of small stones and limestone chips. To the west, the Outer Wall turned sharply northwards, neatly diverging from the Main City Wall owing to the presence of Tower T.830.

3.4. The Triple Fortification Line of Batrāwī Period IIIb (Early Bronze IIIB) and the Destruction of the City Walls

In Batrāwī Period IIIb, the Outer Wall was strengthened in its eastern section with the addition of Scarp Wall W.165, a further structure running parallel to and ending against it (in square BnII4) with round Bastion W.825 (2.65 m-wide and protruding 0.5 m at its base)⁸, as the Outer Wall turned neatly northwards in order to protect the Great Northern Bastion (**Fig. 4**).

A fourth line of fortification was investigated in 2012: a north - south oriented Transverse Wall (W.177), 1.2 - 1.7 m-wide, extending north from Scarp Wall W.165 for a distance of around 7 m, and joining a forward north-west — south-east oriented structure (W.827) which ran parallel to the Outer Wall, thereby also renovating the triple line of walls to the west, where the Outer Wall distinctly protruded from its original alignment. This structure, designated W.827, was reinforced at its juncture with W.177 by means of a buttress (W.826) and had another offset (W.841) on its northern face, some metres to the west. It had a thickness of 1.6 - 1.8 m and, in BIII2,



4. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Area B North: the EB IIIB triple line of fortifications, from west; in the left foreground, EB IIIB Exterior Wall W.827; in the middle, EB III Outer Wall W.155; to the right, Tower T.830 abutting from the Main City-Wall.

also exhibited an inner offset (W.842) towards the Outer Wall. Wall W.827 was designated the Exterior Wall, since it was the most external defensive structure of the city, being constructed on the lower terrace of the fortification system. Exterior Wall W.827 delimited a rhomboidal court (L.824) between it and the Outer Wall, which yielded a great quantity of EB III pottery.

Both the Great Northern Bastion on the upper terrace and Outer Wall W.155 were buried under a thick destruction layer (F.834) with ash, charred material and the remains of carbonised beams. The same destruction layer (F.832), with a dense concentration of ash and pottery sherds, was excavated to the north between the Outer Wall and Exterior Wall W.827, within rhomboidal court L.824, testifying to the fierce fire which marked the end of the life of the 3rd millennium BC city⁹.

4. Area B South: EB IIIB Palace B and the EB IVB Rural Village

Inside the Main City Wall, in Area B South, underneath dwellings and installations of EB IVB (2200 - 2000 BC), the exploration of both Pavilions of the EB IIIB Palace discovered in 2009 continued in the 2012 season (**Fig. 5**). Both the Eastern and Western Pavilions were further exposed. The Western Pavilion was excavated towards the west, in squares BIII7 + BIII8 + BIII9 (northern half), completing the excavation of Hall L.1110 and including two new

6. Nigro 2011: 68; Nigro ed. 2012: 38-40; Nigro and Sala 2010: 244.

7. Lapp 1967: 7-10, 1969: 9-14; Callaway 1980: 147-158.

8. Like Outer Wall W.155 and Scarp Wall W.165, Buttress

W.825 also had a battering face: Nigro 2011: 69; Nigro ed. 2012: 46-52; Nigro and Sala 2010: 240-244.

9. Nigro 2011: 73; Nigro ed. 2012: 52; Nigro and Sala 2010: 240.



5. *Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Area B South: general view of EB III B Palace B, from south, with the Eastern (right) and Western (left) Pavilion.*

rooms (L.1250 and L.1230), while the Eastern Pavilion was investigated in the northern half of square BoII9, exposing the southern sector of yard L.1046.

4.1. *Stratigraphy of Area B South*

The 2012 season of excavation in Area B South allowed us to refine the stratigraphic sequence and occupational phases of both the EB IV village and the underlying EB III Palace on the northern side of the site¹⁰. The outlined sequence extends from the uppermost layer of soil (Phase 1), through successive stages of the EB IV village (Phase 2) and activities of EB III B Palace B (Phase 3), down to the earliest layers preceding the erection of the Palace, identified over the bedrock in two probes opened inside and outside the building (Phase 4).

Phase 1 is represented by a hard layer of sandy soil, produced by erosion and aeolian activity after the final abandonment of the site at the end of the 3rd millennium BC.

Under the topsoil, Phase 2 groups all stratigraphic units related to the EB IV occupation of the area, with two major EB IV B architectural stages (Activities 2a - d and 2e - f), preceded in some areas by ephemeral interventions (Activity 2g) associated with the initial EB IV reoccupation of the hill. In the western squares (BIII7 + BIII8 + BIII9) investigated in 2012, only layers and structures belonging to the latest stage of village, illustrating its construction, use and definitive abandonment / collapse (Activi-

ties 2a - 2c), were detected. Here, the latest EB IV B village was built on top of a 20 - 40 cm-thick layer of rubble (F.1228) and friable brown sandy soil (Activity 2d) which lay directly over the collapsed remains of the underlying EB III B structures. Conversely, in the eastern squares (northern half of BoII9 + BpII9), the latest rural village and its leveling layer (F.1252) concealed an earlier architectural phase, belonging to the construction and use of an initial village stage (Activities 2e - f). The latter was in turn preceded by some activities marking the earliest reoccupation of the hill, after the short period of abandonment that followed the destruction of the EB III B city. These activities were illustrated in the 2012 season in the form of a deep robber pit (P.1283 / F.1271), which cut through the EB III B layers and structures of Palace B down to the bedrock.

The underlying strata belonging to Phase 3 group the activities and stratigraphic units related to the construction, use and destruction of the EB III B palatial building, designated Palace B (Activities 3a - d). Activity 3a illustrates the abandonment and progressive obliteration of the ruins of the EB III B Palace, consisting of a layer of friable greyish-brown sandy soil, with occasional ashy lenses, fallen stones and gravel (F.1236). Activity 3b marks the final destruction of the EB III B Palace, being characterised by thick layers of reddish-brown soil with calcined yellowish mudbricks and plaster fragments, ash, charcoal and burnt beams (F.1128; F.1154; F.1238; F.1244; F.1248; F.1286). Activity 3c represents the use of and some architectural work / refurbishment carried out inside the Palace during EB III B. Finally, Activity 3d is associated with the erection of the Palace in EB III B.

Previous activities in the Palace area are represented by shallow layers of compact buff yellowish clayey soil and small stones lying, together with a few installations, directly over the bedrock, grouped in Phase 4.

4.2. *The 'Palace of the Copper Axes' (EB III B Palace B)*

The exploration of EB III B Palace B (the 'Palace of the Copper Axes'; Nigro 2010) con-

10. For previous stratigraphy in Area B South see Nigro ed. 2012: 146-167; Nigro and Sala 2010: 244-246;

2011: 88.

tinued in the eighth season, both in the Eastern and Western Pavilions (Fig. 5).

In the Western Pavilion, four-pillared Hall L.1040 was completely restored, thereby clarifying the structure of door L.1150, opening in the western side of the room, and door L.1160, opening in the southern side. Just to the south, the excavation of Hall L.1110 was completed with the exposure of its western half, including the entrance (L.1272) onto courtyard L.1100, as well as several places where the destruction layer (F.1128) still covered the floor. Hall L.1110 measured 6.5 × 3.7 m, with a central pillar (W.1163) supported by a stone-built footing and a bedrock step along the shorter east-west axis (Fig. 6), beside which a row of eight medium-sized jars and hole-mouth jars, with small cups alongside, was uncovered. One of them (KB.11.B.1128/43) contained a bone ring (KB.11.B.88) and a group of five sea-shells (KB.11.B.90), probably part of a necklace or bracelet.

The main entrance, L.1272, was in the north-west corner and opened on to a court (or portico) to the west of the Pavilion. Just in front of the entrance, a fifth copper axe was found (KB.11.B.120) deposited in a bedrock depression, while opposite it there was a built-up stone installation with a seat or a bench (W.1189), over which gemstone necklace KB.11.B.101 was found deposited in hole-mouth jar KB.11.B.1128/69 (Nigro 2012b). Just to the right of door L.1272, against western wall W.1249, a bench (B.1253) made of two rectangular limestone blocks (one with a small cup-mark) was also uncovered. It was placed in as-



6. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Palace B: the Western Pavilion, from west; to the left, Pillared Hall L.1040; in the middle, Hall L.1110 with seat B.1189; to the right, room L.1250; in the background, the Eastern Pavilion behind entrance lane L.1050.

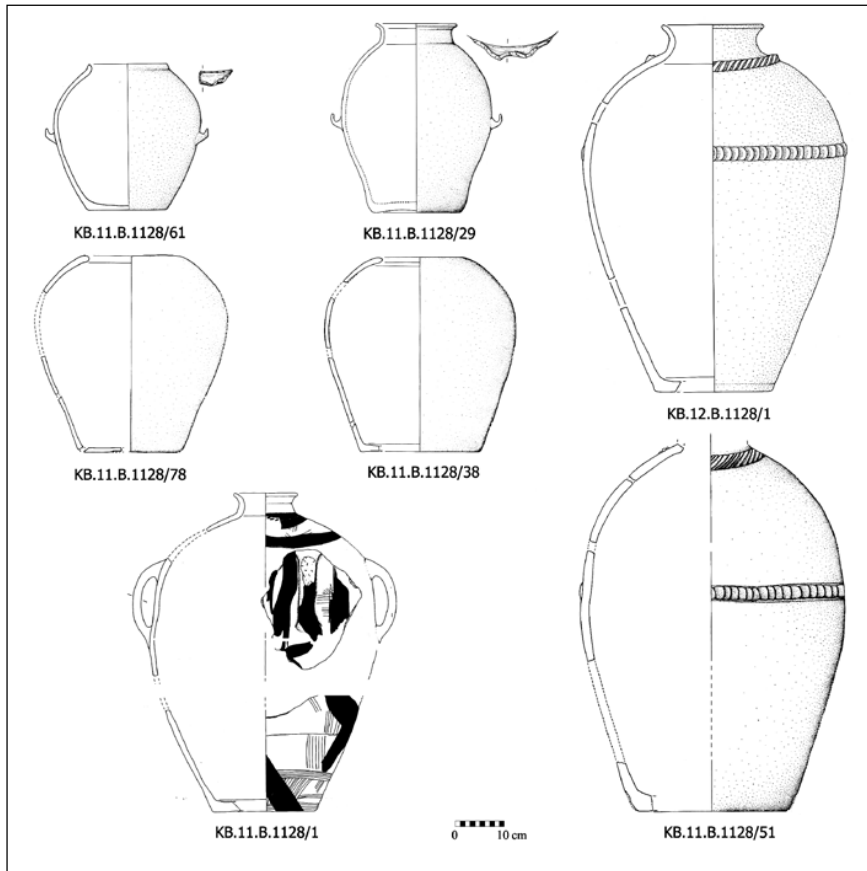
sociation with a rectangular depression adjacent to central pillar base W.1163, which was in turn aligned with a flat stone (W.1183) flanking eastern wall W.1149.

The southern side of the hall was made by cutting into the bedrock to a depth of around 1 m; the actual southern wall (W.1201) was erected on this step. In this wall there was a niche with a bench (B.1188) incorporating a huge *pithos* (Fig. 7). West of B.1188, a round hole (B.1251) was dug into the bedrock in order to house a hole-mouth jar (KB.12.B.1128/4); west of it, another hole-mouth jar (KB.12.B.1128/5) was set against the southern edge of the room. A *pithos* (KB.12.B.1128/1) was placed in the south-west corner, with two other *pithoi* (KB.11.B.1128/77; KB.12.B.1128/8) just to the north. Other vessels were distributed in the central area, above the bedrock step, including a highly red-polished and burnished jug (KB.11.B.1128/49). The overall ceramic assemblage of Hall L.1110 included around fifty complete vessels, viz. miniature vases, simple ware cups, bowls and vats, small- and medium-sized necked jars, and red-burnished jugs and juglets, as well as storage containers (hole-mouth jars, loop-handled jars and *pithoi* (Fig. 8).

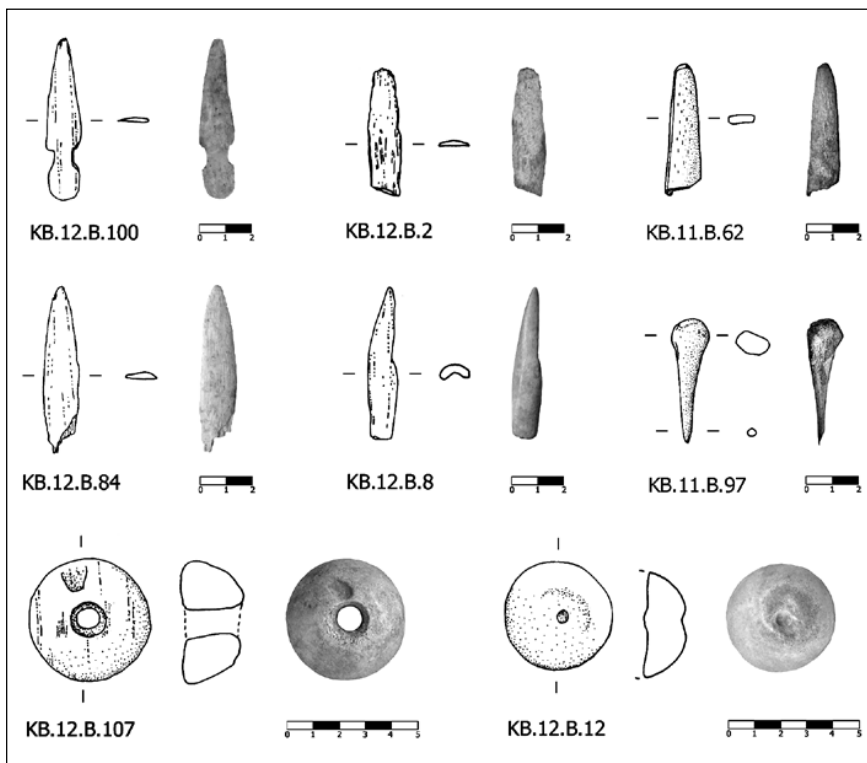
Several bone tools were also found in the southern part of Hall L.1110, including palettes, awls and shuttles, as well as spindle whorls (Fig. 9). A rich collection of lithics, including two flint sickles (KB.11.B.99; KB.11.B.114), Canaan-



7. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Palace B: detail of southern sector of Hall L.1110, with built-up bench B.1188, from north-west.



8. Pottery from Hall L.1110: medium size jars, hole-mouth jars, loop-handled jars and pithoi.



9. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Palace B: bone tools from Hall L.1110.

blades, flint blades and tabular scrapers, as well as pierced sea-shells, small mortar bowls, pestles and polishing pebbles, were found all over the room.

West of Hall L.1110 was another large room (L.1250) with completely separate access: no entrances were identified between it and the rest of the Pavilion (**Fig. 6**). The floor of this latter room consisted of regularized bedrock, punctuated by a series of six round holes (pulping holes and cup-marks). It was connected by means of a ramp (L.1240) with the upper terrace of the Palace located further to the south, where there was another group of rooms (L.1230). Here a large vat was discovered, consisting of the lower half of a *pithos* with a natural rim and a couple of ledge handles.

The Eastern Pavilion of Palace B was laid out on similar, if not symmetrical, lines to that of the Western Pavilion (**Fig. 10**). A 6.5×3.6 m hall (L.430) occupied the northernmost line of rooms¹¹, while a southern yard (L.1046) was investigated in square BoII9, thus evidencing a different function for this part of the Palace. The latter space was a 7.5×5.2 m open area, accessible from entrance lane L.1050. In its destruction layer (F.1154), a third fragmentary basalt potter's wheel was found (KB.12.B.140) along with some ceramic vessels¹².

4.3. The Domestic Quarter of the *Batrāwī* Period IVb (Early Bronze IVB) Village



10. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Area B South: general view of EB IIIB Palace B, from north; to the left, the Eastern Pavilion with Halls L.430 and L.1046; to the right, the Western Pavilion with Pillared Hall L.1040, Storeroom L.1120, Hall L.1110 and room L.1250.

Exploration of the EB IVB (2200 - 2000 BC) village continued in 2012, towards the west in squares BIII7 + BIII78 + BIII79 (northern half) and towards the south in the northern half of squares BoII9 + BpII9¹³.

In BIII8 + BIII9 a rectangular domestic unit (L.1210) was uncovered in a fairly good state of preservation, with a main wall on the southern side (W.1207) preserved to a height of three courses of medium-sized stones, a northern wall (W.1209) made of large rectangular stones set as headers and its western limit coinciding with an apsidal structure (W.1211). The latter enclosed a large space (L.1216) connected to a second curvilinear precinct (W.1213) to the north-west, in square BIII7, delimiting yard L.1224 (**Fig. 11**). Both enclosures consisted of walls a single stone wide (W.1211; W.1213) and can be interpreted as pens for domestic animals. The rectangular house was entered from a door (L.1190) in the middle of its northern side. Next to the entrance there was a platform (B.1226), where three smashed complete jars (simple ware jars KB.12.B.1206/41 and /47, and hole-mouth jar KB.12.B.1206/43) were recovered (**Fig. 12**). On the opposite side of the room, there was another storage device (B.1221) with two hole-



11. Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Area B South: EB IVB domestic units excavated in season 2012, with House L.1210, and curvilinear precincts W.1211 and W.1213, from south.

11. Nigro ed. 2008: 151-157, 2012: 178-183; Nigro and Sala 2010: 248.

12. Unfortunately this part of the Palace was deeply cut by EB IV pit P.1183.

13. For results of previous excavations of the EB IVB village on the northern side of the site see: Nigro ed. 2008: 164-176, 2012: 189-209; Nigro and Sala 2010: 246-248, 2011: 88-89; Sala 2012.



12. *Khirbat al-Batrāwī, Area B South: EB IVB House L.1210, with in situ pottery vessels and small finds.*

mouth jars (KB.12.B.1206/39 and /46). In the middle of the room, a beautifully decorated jar (KB.12.B.1206/31) was recovered. Other installations were uncovered in the eastern part of the house, *viz.* two circular juxtaposed bins (S.1223; S.1225) at its eastern end, which was paved with flagstones. A series of objects and tools were found in L.1210, including two mortar bowls, two basalt grinding stones, a basalt pestle, a limestone pestle, two flint blades and a bone awl (**Fig. 13**). Domestic unit L.1210 and the apsidal enclosures attached to it were attributed to Phase 2c, *i.e.* the latest reconstruction of the EB IVB rural village.

In BoII9 + BpII9 (northern half) two different construction phases were investigated. In the latest one (Phase 2c), the southern continuation

of structures previously excavated in the 2006 - 2009 seasons was revealed, *i.e.* wall W.1005 plus W.1235, W.361 plus W.1229, and W.353. The latter delineated the north-west corner of unit L.1234, joining with perpendicular NE - e SW wall W.1233. A thick levelling fill (F.1252) buried the earliest phase of occupation (Phase 2f) represented by a rectangular unit (L.1270), made of large stones laid as headers on the same orientation as L.1234, and an open yard (L.1260) with benches and working platforms made of small stones. An additional rectangular domestic unit (L.1290) was uncovered to the east, in BpII9.

5. Restoration

During the eighth season (2012), restoration works were carried out in both Area B North (on the multiple lines of fortifications) and in Area B South (on Palace B).

In Area B North, all of Outer Wall W.155 was restored from east to west, consolidating its upper courses using an antique-like mortar. Another stretch of the Main Inner City Wall was also restored, especially on its outer face where the curtain wall had partly collapsed where it was cut by pit P.819.

In Area B South, restoration of the stone walls of Palace B continued, focusing on Store-room L.1120, Hall L.1110 (where door L.1272, connecting the hall with yard L.1100, and seat B.1189 were restored), and room L.1250 (exca-



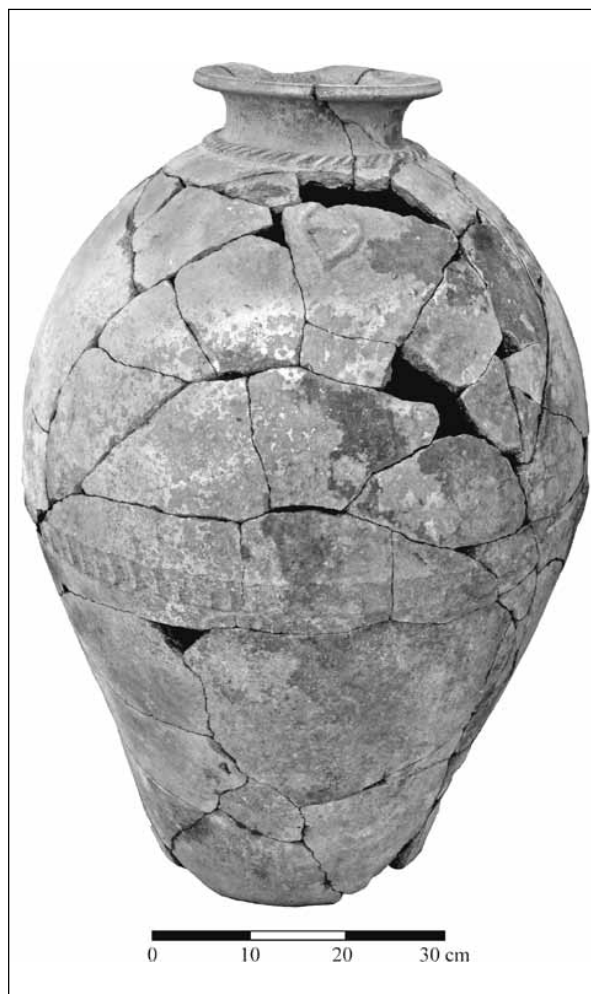
13. *Khirbat al-Batrāwī: EB IVB pottery vessels, tools and small finds from House L.1210.*

vated in 2012), where walls W.1245 and W.1249 were only preserved to a height of two or three courses with a height of around 0.4 - 0.5 m.

During this season, a major focus of the project was once again the restoration of finds recovered from Palace B, especially the numerous smashed pottery vessels (including those with applied decoration (**Fig. 14**) from the destruction layers of each room of the Palace.

6. Conclusions

The eighth season at the site further increased our knowledge of this Early Bronze Age city, in the form of the extraordinary finds from Palace B and the impressive architecture of its multiple fortifications, presenting a vibrant example of urban culture in Jordan during the 3rd millennium BC.



14. Khirbat al-Batrāwī: restored pithos KB.10.B.1040/6 from Pillared Hall L.1040; to be noted the applied sign on the shoulder of the vase.

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