Khirbet al-Batrawy
*Project Name: Archaeological Investigations on the Bronze Age Urban Development at Khirbet al-Batrawy, Upper Wadi az-Zarqa*
*Director: Prof. Lorenzo Nigro.*
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*Representative: Romil Gharyib*

The fifth season at Khirbet al-Batrawy, an Early Bronze Age fortified town focused on excavation and restoration of the EB II-III Main City-Wall, and on the excavation of the EB III double and triple line of fortifications in Area B North; on the excavation of EB IV dwellings and EB IIIB houses and buildings (B1, B2, B3) in Area B South; and on the completion of restoration of the EB II-III Broad-Room Temple brought to light in the previous seasons on the easternmost terrace of the site (Area F).

**Area B North - the EBII-III main city-wall and the EB III triple line fortification**

The exploration of the articulated defensive system in the 3rd millennium BC was carried on by opening a series of new squares towards the west and the north with the aim of further investigating the sequence of structures which composed such an impressive fortification system (Fig. 1). The overall sequence of defensive works in Area B North based upon stratigraphy was already known.

The EB II-III Main City-Wall was further excavated towards the west (in squares BmII5+BmII4), exposing its battering foot and repaired superstructure up to a breach (P.819), probably caused by the collapse of the outer curtain wall at the final destruction of the city. The EB IIIA Outer Wall (W.155), uncovered in square BmII4, turns sharply northwards, neatly diverging from the Main City-Wall. This suggests that a major tower, presumably the main gate of this period was located just to the west. The curvilinear Outwork (W.185), brought to light in squares BpII5+BpII4+BoII4+BoII3 and linked to the Outer Wall, was further explored by digging the collapse and destruction layers burying it. This 1.4 m high structure emerged with big boulders employed in the lower courses and medium size stones on the upper courses.

The EB IIIB Scarp-Wall (W.165), adjoined to the Outer Wall and superimposed on the curvilinear Outwork, was explored in squares BnII4+BoII4, where the latter was preserved up to the height of 1.8 m. This structure runs parallel to the Outer Wall, but to the west, in square BnII4, it ends against the latter with a semicircular bastion (W.825; Fig. 2). This features again points to the possible presence of a gate further to the west. Some meters east of the bastion, a major transversal wall (W.177) was uncovered springing out from the outer face of the Scarp-Wall towards the north for a length of around 9 m and with a width of 1.2 m. Such a structure was a further external defensive work, taking the place of the previous curvilinear Outwork. The EB IIIB defensive system was destroyed by a fierce destruc-
tion, which outside the Scarp-Wall and in between it and protruding Wall W.177 was preserved with a 0.8 m thick layer of ashes, burnt and broken mud-bricks and charred materials. After the final destruction of the city, around 2300 BC, the ruins of the triple line fortification in Area B North were abandoned for a century or more, when an EB IV rural community settled sparsely on the khirbat. This community was responsible of the erection of a stone embankment, representing the regularization of the collapsed defensive structures on the northern slope of the hill.

The 2009 season showed that after the earthquake which brought to a sudden end the EB II city, the fortifications of the northern side of Batrawy were progressively strengthened, with the addition of a second Outer Wall and of a curvilinear Outwork in the Early Bronze IIIA, and of a Scarp-Wall with a semicircular Bastion (W.825), plus a protruding rectangular structure (W.177) during the Early Bronze IIIB, demonstrating the constant flourishing of the city until a final dramatic event dated around 2300 BC.

**Area B South - EB IVB dwellings, EB IIIB Building B1, House B2 and Warehouse B3**

Excavation in Area B South just south of the Main City-Wall brought to light a series of dwellings and installations of the EB IVB rural village, which stood upon the ruins of the EB II-III city, and, after their removal, allowed exploration of some buildings of the EB IIIB city itself. Excavation works were carried out in three different sectors expanding the Area towards the east, the south-west and the west. Two EB IVB layers were uncovered, the lowest one being a camp, illustrating the re-occupation of the site in the last century of the 3rd millennium BC.

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**Fig. 1:** General view of EB IIIB triple line fortification on the northern side of the site, from east.

**Fig. 2:** General view of the EB IIIB triple line fortification, from north-west; in the foreground, EB IIIB Scarp-Wall W.165 adjoining to the outer face of EB IIIA-B Outer Wall W.155 and ending with semicircular Bastion W.825, in the left background, EB IIIB transversal Wall W.177, protruding from Scarp-Wall W.165; in the right background, EB II-III Main City-Wall.

**Fig. 3:** House B2 with semicircular plastered device W.135, from south-west.