



In squares BpII5, BqII5, BrII5, BqII6, BrII6, facing the EB II city-gate, excavations were made to bring to light and restore a further section of the EB IIIA outer wall (W.155), which was uncovered for a 25m long stretch, both on its outer and inner sides. This impressive defensive work, 1.7m wide, was made of cyclopean limestone boulders laid in superimposed intermingled courses with a battering face on its outer northern side, while on its southern side less big blocks supported the rubble inner filling of the structure and delimited to the north the passageway running in between the main wall and the outer wall.

A section of the inner face of wall W.155 was also restored, in the area just east of the EBII gate, with a reversible technique and using the same stones collapsed from this structure in antiquity, in order to prevent the falling inwards of the inclined cyclopean blocks of the outer face (Fig. 1).

Regarding the EB II city-gate (Fig. 2), further restoration works and the removal of baulk BqII6/BrII6, just east of the gate, lead to the discovery of some blocks abutting the main city-wall foot, on both sides of the passageway, and presumably related to it, and of a squared stone pillar, with a central shallow smoothed depression, which possibly was used in the gate closure (Fig. 3).

Rehabilitation works at Khirbat al-Batrawi also included the systematic removal of a large amount of collapsed and erratic stones from the northern slope of the site, in order to enhance the readability of the urban topography and to facilitate further exploration of the town defences in the next seasons.

### Area F – the EB IV Rural Village and the EB II-III Broad-Room Temple

Excavation and restoration works in Area F were aimed at completing the exploration of the western side of the EB II-III Broad-Room Temple, and at further investigation of the EB IV dwellings which par-



Fig. 3: Area B North. Squared stone pillar, possibly used in the city-gate closure.



Fig. 4: Area F. The Broad-Room Temple L.500, from west; in the foreground, the slab-paved platform B.585 with its inner niche and the couple of pillars facing it.



### *Khirbat al-Batrawi*

*Project Name: Archaeological Investigations on the Bronze Age Urban Development at Khirbat*

*al-Batrawi, Upper Wadi az-Zarqa*

*Duration: 26 / 5 – 19 / 6 / 2008.*

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The fourth season of investigations at Khirbat al-Batrawi (Lat. 32°05',218" N, Long. 36°04',237" E), the Early Bronze Age fortified town in the Upper Wadi az-Zarqa discovered in 2004 was focused on excavations and restorations of the EB II-III city-wall and city-gate in Area B North, and on the complete uncovering and partial restoration of the EB II-III Broad-Room Temple discovered in the previous seasons on the easternmost terrace of the site (Area F).

### **Area B North – the EBII-III city-walls and city-gate**

In Area B North, corresponding to the central part of the northern side of the site, excavation and restoration works were focused on the articulated fortification line, where a 30m long stretch of the main inner city-wall had been excavated in previous seasons together with the EB II city-gate, and where restorations with antique-like mortar were started. A further stretch of the main city-wall was excavated towards the west, in square BnI15, identifying from the top the following series of defensive structures: an EB IV embankment, regularizing the collapsed previous walls (W.199); the EB IIIB double line of city-walls with the main wall (W.103a) and the outer wall (W.155) with the adjoined scarp wall (W.165); the EB IIIA double defensive line, including the reconstructed inner main wall (W.103b) and the outer wall (W.155); the EB II main inner wall (W.103c) with a varying width of 2.9-3.2m, and a preserved average height of 2m (which indicates the original height of the city-wall was 8-9m).



Fig. 1: Area B North. Restoration work at Wall W.155, from west.



Fig2. : Area B North. The restored EB II city-gate L.160, from north-east, with blocks abutting the sides of the passageway.

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tially cut away the eastern side of this major building.

The excavation of baulks CpII17/CoII17 and CpII18/19 completed the exploration of a large square EB IV dwelling, House L.530, with its inner room L.560 and semi-circular annex L.564, and a series of installations for food preparation and storage. In squares CmII17 and CmII18 the western side of the Broad-Room Temple was brought to light, also uncovering a north-south wall (W.557) protruding from the southern façade of the building towards the south (Fig. 4). Excavations within the cella (L.500) have revealed the presence of two pillars facing a raised slab-paved platform (B.585) where two vertical slabs delimited a restricted central area. Also the rear wall of the temple was excavated up to its western end, discovering a curvilinear structure (W.587) connected with the north-western corner of the building, which possibly represents a boundary wall, like the one known at at-Tall (\*Ayy) EB II temple.

## Conclusions

The fourth season of excavations and restorations at Khirbat al-Batrawi improved our knowledge of the Early Bronze II-III city of Batrawy, and, especially, of its formidable defensive system which reached the overall width of around 9m (Fig. 5), and protected the city for many centuries, until its final destruction around 2300 BC. The major Broad-Room Temple erected on the easternmost terrace of the site, overlooking the ford and the crossroad in the valley, today occupied by the modern city of Zarqa, was further investigated uncovering the western side of the cella with its cult installations (a raised platform with a niche delimited by stelae and two pillars).

Thanks to restoration works the Batrawi city-gate and city-wall stand now as among the best preserved monuments of this kind in the region, and hint at the resources and capabilities of the local community during the Early Bronze Age at the dawn of urbanism in Southern Levant.



Fig. 5: Area B North. General view of the EB II-III B triple line of fortifications, from west, with main city-wall W.103 (EB II-III B) to the right, outer wall W.155 (EB IIIA-III B) in the middle, and reinforcing scarp-wall W.165 (EB III B) to the left. In the left background, EB IIIA curvilinear defensive outwork W.185.