

[ROSAPAT 08]



KHIRBET AL-BATRAWY III

**The EB II-III triple fortification line,
and the EB IIIB quarter inside the city-wall
Preliminary report of the fourth (2008)
and fifth (2009) seasons of excavations**

Edited by LORENZO NIGRO



ROME 2012

«LA SAPIENZA» EXPEDITION TO PALESTINE & JORDAN

ROME «LA SAPIENZA»



EXPEDITION TO PALESTINE & JORDAN

ROME «LA SAPIENZA»



STUDIES ON THE
ARCHAEOLOGY
OF
PALESTINE &
TRANSJORDAN

08

UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA «LA SAPIENZA»
DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE DELL'ANTICHITÀ
SEZIONE DI ORIENTALISTICA
EXPEDITION TO PALESTINE & JORDAN

KHIRBET AL-BATRAWY III

**The EB II-III triple fortification line,
and the EB IIIB quarter inside the city-wall
Preliminary report of the fourth (2008)
and fifth (2009) seasons of excavations**

Edited by

LORENZO NIGRO

with contributions by

LORENZO NIGRO, MAURA SALA,
FRANCESCA ALHAIQUE, MARY ANNE TAFURI,
LAURA MEDEGHINI, ENRICO ASCALONE
and DARIA MONTANARI

ROME 2012

ROME «LA SAPIENZA» STUDIES
ON THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PALESTINE & TRANSJORDAN

EDITOR: L. NIGRO

EDITORIAL BOARD:

I. BRANCOLI VERGER, M. SALA

VOLUME 08

L. NIGRO (ed.)

Khirbet al-Batrawy III. The EB II-III triple fortification line and the EB IIIB quarter inside the city-wall. Preliminary report of the fourth (2008) and fifth (2009) seasons of excavations

(= Rome «La Sapienza» Studies on the Archaeology of Palestine & Transjordan, 8)

© Copyright 2012 «La Sapienza» Expedition to Palestine & Jordan

Sezione di Orientalistica - Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità

Via Palestro, 63 – 00185 Rome – ITALY

All rights reserved. Copy or reproduction of parts of text or illustrations is strictly forbidden without the explicit written permission given by «La Sapienza» Expedition to Palestine & Jordan.

pp. 438, 17 x 24 cm, B/W illustrations.

ISBN 978-88-88438-11-5

ISSN 1826-9206

CONTENTS

0. Premise: Rome “La Sapienza” Expedition to Jordan	
[by Lorenzo Nigro]	iii
0.1. Foreword: aims and results of the fourth (2008) and fifth (2009) seasons at Khirbet al-Batrawy	iv
0.1.1. The fourth season (2008) of excavations at Khirbet al-Batrawy	vi
0.1.2. The fifth season (2009) of excavations at Khirbet al-Batrawy	vi
0.2. Introduction to the present volume	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
1. Introduction [by Lorenzo Nigro]	1
1.1. Activities on the field: archaeological investigations and restorations in seasons 2008-2009	1
1.1.1. Excavations in the fourth season (2008)	2
1.1.2. Excavations in the fifth season (2009)	3
1.1.3. Restorations in the fourth (2008) and fifth (2009) seasons	4
1.2. Stratigraphy and chronology	10
2. Area B North: the Early Bronze II-III fortification system	
[by Lorenzo Nigro]	13
2.1. Stratigraphy of Area B North [by Maura Sala]	14
2.1.1. Phase 1: abandonment	15
2.1.2. Phase 2: the Batrawy IVb embankment	16
2.1.3. Phase 3: stratigraphy of Batrawy IIIb fortification system	17
2.1.4. Phase 4: stratigraphy of Batrawy IIIa fortification system	28
2.1.5. Phase 5: stratigraphy of Batrawy II fortification system	29
2.2. Architecture & finds: the Early Bronze II-III fortifications [by Lorenzo Nigro]	31
2.2.1. The Batrawy II city-wall (Early Bronze II)	32
2.2.2. The Batrawy IIIa double line of fortifications (Early Bronze IIIA)	38
2.2.3. The Batrawy IIIb triple line of fortifications (Early Bronze IIIB) ...	46
2.2.4. The final destruction of Batrawy IIIb defensive system	52
2.2.5. The Batrawy IVb outer embankment (Early Bronze IVB)	53
List of pottery, objects and samples by contexts	55
Catalogue of pottery and small finds [by Maura Sala]	59
3. Area B South: the EB IIIB quarter and the EB IVB village inside the EB II-III Main City-Wall [by Lorenzo Nigro]	145
3.1. Stratigraphy of Area B South [by Maura Sala]	146
3.1.1. Phase 1: abandonment	147
3.1.2. Phase 2: stratigraphy of Batrawy IVb village	147
3.1.3. Phase 3: stratigraphy of Batrawy IIIb structures	158

3.2. Architecture & finds: the EB IIIB buildings inside the EB II-III	
Main City-Wall [by Lorenzo Nigro]	169
3.2.1. Building B2	170
3.2.2. Yard L.936.....	176
3.2.3. Building B1: the Eastern Pavilion	178
3.2.4. Building B3: the Western Pavilion	184
3.2.5. Peri-pomerial street L.1060	188
3.3. Architecture & finds: the EB IVB village inside the EB II-III	
Main City-Wall [by Lorenzo Nigro]	189
3.3.1. The Batrawy IVb earliest surfaces (Activity 2g)	189
3.3.2. The Batrawy IVb earliest dwellings (Activities 2f-e)	193
3.3.3. The <i>floruit</i> of the Batrawy IVb rural village (Activities 2d-b).....	202
List of pottery, objects and samples by contexts.....	211
Catalogue of pottery small finds [by Maura Sala].....	215
4. Bibliography	325
Appendix A. Faunal remains [by Francesca Alhaique]	333
Appendix B. Two infants from Khirbet al-Batrawy	
[by Mary Anne Tafuri].....	365
Appendix C. Khirbet Kerak Ware from Khirbet al-Batrawy	
[by Maura Sala].....	371
Appendix D. A preliminary archaeometric study of Khirbet Kerak Ware	
from Khirbet al-Batrawy, Jordan [by Laura Medeghini].....	381
Appendix E. Balance weights from Khirbet al-Batrawy	
[by Enrico Ascalone]	387
Appendix F. Small finds from Khirbet al-Batrawy [by Daria Montanari]	395

0. Premise: Rome “La Sapienza” Expedition to Jordan

[by Lorenzo Nigro]

Archaeological activities carried on by Rome “La Sapienza” University at Khirbet al-Batrawy since 2005¹, and in 2006 and 2007², continued also in May - June 2008 and 2009 (fig. 0.1), stating a further commitment in the exploration of the Early Bronze Age II-III city and EB IV rural village, and in the systematic restoration of the main monuments uncovered so far (basically the Broad-Room Temple in Area F, the City-Walls and EB II City-Gate in Area B North; and Building B1 in Area B South).



Fig. 0.1 - General view of the site of Khirbet al-Batrawy during the works at the northern fortification lines in season 2009, from north.

¹ Renewed archaeological activities in Upper Wadi az-Zarqa (fig. 0.2) represented the continuation of a research project carried out since 1987 by Rome “La Sapienza” University with a series of systematic archaeological surveys and soundings focused on the Wadi el-Yabis (Palumbo - Mabry 1988; Palumbo *et al.* 1990; 1993), Wadi az-Zarqa and Wadi edh-Dhuleyl basins (Palumbo *et al.* 1996; 1997; Caneva *et al.* 2001), under the scientific coordination of P. Matthiae, and the direction on the field of G. Palumbo, which was the first project aimed at a comprehensive territorial study of this crucial region of Jordan, where several decisive historical transformations and cultural achievements took place in pre-classical periods, and produced the identification of hundreds of previously unknown sites of any period (Nigro 2006a, 229-231; Nigro ed. 2006, iii-ix, 1-5).

² Seasons 2005-2007 were published in two volumes of preliminary reports (Nigro ed. 2006; 2008), and in a series of articles (Nigro 2006a; 2006b; 2006d; 2007a; 2007b; 2008a; 2008b; Nigro - Sala - Polcaro 2008; Nigro - Sala 2009; 2010), and studies on the origins of urbanization in Southern Levant (Nigro 2009a; 2010a; 2010b; 2010c; 2011).

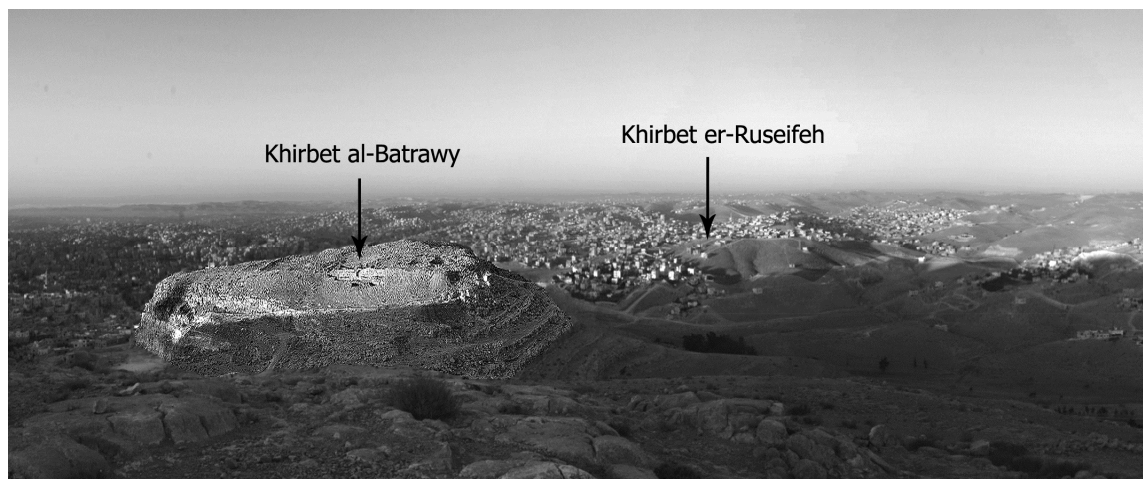


Fig. 0.2 - The site of Khirbet al-Batrawy on the eastern side of the Wadi az-Zarqa Valley.

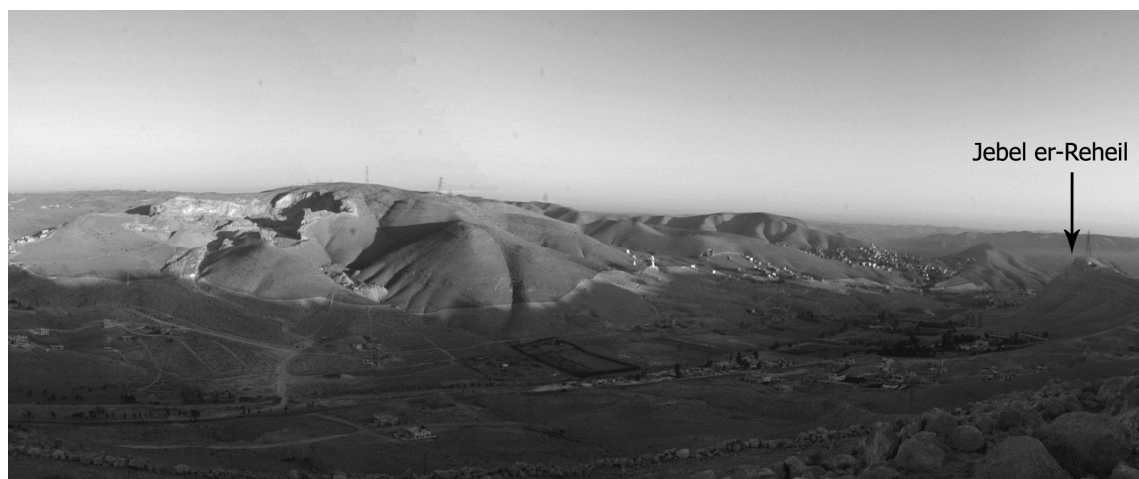
0.1. Foreword: aims and results of the fourth (2008) and fifth (2009) seasons at Khirbet al-Batrawy

The fourth and fifth seasons represented a further enhancement of the Pilot Project. After the excavation of the EB II city-gate in the EB II-III Main City-Wall in Area B North³, and of the Broad-Room Temple in Area F⁴, as well as the exploration of the EB IVB rural village in several areas of the site (A, B South, D, and F)⁵, seasons 2008 and 2009 were basically devoted to the exploration of EB III monuments in Areas B South and B North. This aimed at a wider and deeper investigation of the urban *floruit* at Khirbet al-Batrawy, and produced the unexpected result of the discovery of a large public building on the northern slope of the site, inside the Main City-Wall, which surely will represent a future field of investigation for the expedition. The fourth season (2008) was focused on the fortification system on the northern side of the site, with the goal of disentangling its architectural and stratigraphic sequence, as well as to reconstruct its volumetric organization through time. The stratigraphy of the fortifications provided a precious tool for reading the history of the site. In the same season, excavations were completed at the Broad-Room Temple in Area F, and systematic restorations of this monument were started.

³ Nigro 2009a, 663-665; 2010a, 434-437; 2010b, 44-45; Nigro ed. 2008, 77-89.

⁴ Nigro 2009a, 665-666; 2010a, 438; 2010b, 47-48; Nigro ed. 2008, 276-293.

⁵ Nigro 2008a, 668-671; 2009a, 670-672; 2010a, 441-443; 2010b, 113-114; Nigro ed. 2006, 77-102; 2008, 28-36, 164-176, 244, 294-305.



The fifth (2009) season was, conversely, devoted to both the continuation of excavation at the triple fortification line on the northern side, and to the exploration of the EB IIIB quarter inside the Main City-Wall in Area B South. This had already produced very interesting finds (including a copper fragment and a carnelian bead)⁶, so that it was deemed, also due to its location just inside the entrance to the city, a very favourable one. Here, at the end of the season, a major structure (named Building B3), with inside a 1.2 m thick destruction layer with *in situ* material in an extraordinary state of preservation, was definitely recognized as a public building.

Also during the fifth season (2009) restoration works were carried out systematically both at the Broad-Room Temple in Area F, and on the city-walls in Area B North, concentrating on the Main City-Wall west of the EB II city-gate, especially on its inner and outer curtains.

Systematic restoration works were carried out at Khirbet al-Batrawy since the first season at the main monuments of the site. Due to the peculiar characteristics of the hill, heavily threatened by modern building activities and illicit excavations, in fact, a safeguard and rehabilitation project has been put forward, foreseeing the restorations of the Early Bronze Age city, and the implementation of an archaeological park. The Pilot Project, conceived in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities and supported by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, also envisages the creation of a local *antiquarium*, where finds from the site will be displayed.

⁶ Nigro 2007a, 353; 2009a, 667-670; 2010a, 440-442; Nigro ed. 2008, 151-162.

0.1.1. The fourth season (2008) of excavations at Khirbet al-Batraway

The fourth season of excavations and restorations at Khirbet al-Batraway took place from May 26th to June 19th 2008 on the behalf of the Jordan Department of Antiquities and its director, the late Dr. Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, with the support of Rome "La Sapienza" University⁷, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research.

Excavations were carried out in two areas (§ 1.1.1.): Area B North, across and outside the northern fortification line, enlarging the excavation area towards the west and the east (§ 2.); and Area F, at the Broad-Room Temple on the easternmost terrace. During the same season restoration works were carried out at the northern city-walls in Area B North: on the EB II-III Main City-Wall, starting from the western jamb of the EB II city-gate towards the west up to square BoII6, and on Outer Wall W.155; and in Area B South, where the inner curtain wall of the EB II-III Main City-Wall was restored, including staircase W.181 (§ 1.1.3.).

0.1.2. The fifth season (2009) of excavations at Khirbet al-Batraway

The fifth season of excavations and restorations at Khirbet al-Batraway took place from May 16th to June 15th 2009 on the behalf of the Jordan Department of Antiquities and its director, the late Dr. Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, with the support of Rome "La Sapienza" University⁸, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research.

During the fifth season, excavations were focused on three areas (§ 1.1.2.): Area B North, mainly on the EB III outer fortification lines towards the north (§ 2.); Area F, where the Broad-Room Temple was restored (§ 1.1.3.); and Area B South, where a large building was definitely identified and started to be systematically uncovered (§ 3.). Restoration works during the fifth campaign were concentrated on the EB II-III Main City-Wall in Area B North, advancing towards the west up to square BnII6; and on the Broad-Room Temple in Area F, which was fully rehabilitated (§ 1.1.3.).

⁷ Rome "La Sapienza" team in year 2008 included: L. Nigro, director; M. Sala, field director; A. Di Michele, V. Tumolo, P. Vitolo. The representative of the Department of Antiquities, who gave an invaluable support to the Expedition, was Inspector Ahmed Shorma.

⁸ Rome "La Sapienza" team in year 2009 included: L. Nigro, director; M. Sala, field director; A. Massafra, P. Vitolo, M. Zingarello (Area B South); C. Chiefari, D. Ghigi, I. Salimbeni (Area B South-East); E. Casadei, M. D'Andrea, S. Massi (Area B North). The representative of the Department of Antiquities, who gave an invaluable support to the Expedition, was Inspector Romel Ghrayib.

0.2. Introduction to the present volume

Activities and finds of the fourth and fifth seasons (2008, 2009) are thoroughly illustrated in the following chapters of this volume. The Introduction (Chapter 1) is dedicated to an overall presentation of aims and results of the two seasons, as well as to a further updating of the general topography and stratigraphy of the site in the light of latest results.

Chapters 2-4 account for results obtained respectively in Areas B North, on the northern line of fortifications; Area B South, inside the northern city-wall; and Area F, on the lowest Terrace V, with stratigraphy, architecture and finds; all chapters are followed by the list of finds arranged by contexts (with the aim of highlighting associations between pottery, tools and objects and to provide a comprehensive distributive figure), and by a detailed catalogue of retrieved items, including drawings and photos in plates⁹, with dating and, when possible, comparisons¹⁰.

Appendix A by Francesca Alhaique is the report on faunal remains retrieved in the two 2008 and 2009 seasons, with some consideration on taxonomy.

Appendix B by Mary Anne Tafuri is the anthropological study of the two infant burials from Area B South.

Appendix C by Maura Sala and Appendix D by Laura Medeghini are devoted to a group of Khirbet Kerak Ware fragments retrieved in Area B North, which provide an interesting insight into the diffusion of this production in early urbanised centres of Transjordan.

Appendix E by Enrico Ascalone is a thorough presentation of balance weights retrieved in seasons 2005-2009, intended as indicators of a complex system of exchanges.

Appendix F by Daria Montanari provides a systematic and interpretive catalogue of the *instrumentum domesticum* of Batrawy, to be used as a tool for the study of ordinary life in a 3rd millennium BC city.

⁹ Pottery is always illustrated by scale 1:4; the scale of objects drawings and photos is indicated in plates. Pottery and objects drawings were realized in year 2008 by V. Tumolo; in year 2009 they were realized by E. Casadei, M. D'Andrea, M. Zingarello. Plans were drawn by M. Zingarello (Area B South), I. Salimbeni (Area B South-East), M. D'Andrea and V. Tumolo (Area B North), V. Tumolo (Area F). Pottery and objects photos were done by A. Di Michele in year 2008, and by D. Ghigi and S. Massi in year 2009. Pottery sheets and register were filed by M. Sala. Object sheets and register were filed by P. Vitolo. Sample register was filed by A. Di Michele in year 2008, and by I. Salimbeni in year 2009. Plates of pottery and objects were done by E. Casadei, E. Gallo, A. Massafra and M. Sala.

¹⁰ Catalogues were filed by M. Sala.

Acknowledgements

The Expedition wishes to express his deepest thank to the late Dr. Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, General Director of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, for his enduring support, and to all the staff of the Department of Antiquities for its effective and prompt cooperation. A particular appreciation is addressed to the personnel of the Excavation Sector, Dr. Jihad Haroun and Dr. Khalil Hamdan; to the Inspectors, Ahmed Shorma (2008) and Romil Ghayib (2009); and to the personnel of the Zarqa Office of the Department for their helpful collaboration on the field. The activity of Rome "La Sapienza" Expedition to Jordan was made possible thanks to the encouragement of Prof. Paolo Matthiae, whom I wish to deeply thank, and to the strong support of the Department of Sciences of Antiquity of Rome "La Sapienza" University, in the person of its former Director, Prof. Gilda Bartoloni, and its current Director, Prof. Gian Luca Gregori. A grateful thank is also due to the other Academic Authorities of Rome "La Sapienza" University, the Rector, Prof. Luigi Frati, the Vice-Rector, Prof. Federico Masini, the Dean of the Faculty of Humanistic Sciences, Prof. Roberto Nicolai, and all members of the Research Commission of the University. The project of archaeological investigation and restoration at Khirbet al-Batrawy is supported by Rome "La Sapienza" University, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹¹, and the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research.

The Expedition expresses its gratefulness to the Italian Embassy in Amman, in the persons of the Ambassador of Italy, H.E. Francesco Fransoni, Dr. Stefano Stucci and Dr. Natalia Sanginiti; and to the Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Italy, Her Royal Highness Wijdan Al Hashemi, for their kind cooperation.

I also wish to thank all personnel at Rome "La Sapienza" University who made possible prompt publication of excavations reports, and all the members of the Administrative Secretariat (Dr. Angela Chiaranza).

A number of colleagues and friends helped the expedition in these years with their interest and suggestions. I wish to thank Barbara Porter, Gaetano e Anna Palumbo, Zeidan Kafafi, Jean-François Salles, Ignacio Arce, Frank Braemer, Jacques Seigne; to all of them a heartfelt thank is addressed to.

Rome, 15th December 2011

Lorenzo Nigro

¹¹ A special thank is addressed to Prof. Ettore Janulardo, of the Directorate General for the Promotion of the "Country System" (DGSP), Office VI.