

Khirbet El-Nahas 2006 – Area A

Daily Journal

10.4.2006

L150: represents the upper layer of rock and fill located immediately over topsoil within the passageway of the gate. Masses of rocks represent the collapse of the upper courses of the gate structures. Similar scene appeared within the two northern chambers excavated in 2002, where after a single layer of only rocks appeared a layer of rocks immersed within fill. So far it seems that a similar scene will appear here too. The upper rock only layer has been mostly removed from the central and western parts. The eastern part will remain unexcavated for the time being and might be left so to allow the formation of a section. So far no finds other than a single ceramic shard.

L151: Represents the clearing of the southern wall of both chambers excavated in 2002. Top of the walls difficult to define due to the flaky substance of the building stones, which makes the differentiation from the stone and dirt fill between the two faces of the wall difficult. So far no finds.

10.5.2006

L150-151: Further progress in removal of the layers of rocks and earth of which the debris of the gate structure consists. Now the outer line of wall L151 is completely exposed and three courses can be defined. The excavated material consists of light colored dusty soil within which many stones no doubt from the debris of the gate

structure. No pottery at all was found today, nor any other find other than a single concave grinding stone ca. 30 cm long, made of red granite. The stone was found among the debris and was either used on an upper floor of the structure or, more likely, incorporated in secondary use as building material.

L152: New locus representing the debris of the western wall of the fort, ca. 5-10 m from the southern wall of the gate structure, which meets in a corner with the wall near this point. The locus is formed as a slope of ca. 40 degrees descending from the wall towards the flat ground of the fort at its latest stage. Similar layer was excavated in 2002 and like that, the scene emerging is of fallen stones and fill accumulated around them. No ceramic or other finds, which is to be expected among debris of fallen walls and wind blown dust. By the end of the day several courses of the inner wall have been exposed.

10.6.2006

L152: Represents a layer of debris and fill originating in the western wall of the fort. There is a range of scatter ca. 3m east from the wall. Origin of collapse: earthquake. Only 2 shards of pottery found today as well as 3 buckets of slag. Locus closed with the discovery of a lower layer that includes far fewer rocks and larger contents of slag.

L153: Represents the western wall of the fort. The wall will not be archaeologically excavated but only exposed from the debris and fill on its eastern face.

L150: It is now clear that below the collapsed debris of the top layer there is a deep layer of stones and sediment that have been intentionally introduced in an effort to fill in the passageway. This conclusion emerges from the analysis of the blocking of the eastern end of the passage. The blocking is definitely aimed at containing the fill, as evident from the quality of the construction of the blocking especially its southern end. Locus 150 closes with the penetration into the intentional fill. During today's excavation a small quantity of slag and 3 pottery shards have been found.

L151: Continued exposure of the southern face of the wall. There is a possibility that the entrances were sealed in intentionally also through a built blocking on the southern end. The northern end of the blocking is not built and consists of fill and rubble, while at the southern end there seems to be a course of roughly placed building stones. Further excavation should clarify the point. Comment: so far the southern limit of the passage has not been exposed.

10.7.2006

L154: Locus represents layer of mixed fill that consists of the lower level of debris from L153 and the very top of a new layer rich in slag and ash which will be renamed tomorrow. The rocks no doubt belong to the collapse of the western wall of the fort just as those discovered yesterday closer to the remains itself. The present layer already contains large pieces of slag which belong no doubt to the latest phase of occupation during which the fort was utilized for smelting activities here. Very few ceramic shards

within this layer. The locus will be closed tomorrow with the removal of the remains of the debris and overall leveling into the slag and ash layer.

L155: the locus represents a mass of building stone mixed with light color sediment accumulated in the passageway of the gate structure. The difference between this locus and L150 is in fact that L150 was virtually clean of fill between the stones while L155 contains dense accumulation of sediment. It is not yet clear however material accumulated here is related to a collapse; due to earthquake or from intentional fill. It is at the latest period of occupation. Within the fill, few shards of pottery, among them one clearly of the Iron Age (ridge below rim) as well as a few scattered fragments of slag. Due to this excavation the northern wall of the two southern chambers has been exposed. The wall is preserved to roughly a similar height as the parallel wall – L151.

L.-99: During cleaning work by northern perimeter wall of the two northern chambers (outer face) a fragment of a tuyere pipe has been found.

10.8.2006

L155: End of excavation of first layer of sediment and rocks filling in the passageway of the gate structure. Continues undisturbed homogenous appearance of rock scatters and dense light colored sediment, with very few ceramic shards, including the rim of an Iron Age whole mouth jar with a ledge handle, and pieces of slag, among them particles containing carbon and ash. The northern face of the southern wall of the passageway is now exposed to ca. 4 courses (L156). Preservation is poor due to frequent use of soft

granite, which crumbles at contact. Entrance way to the eastern chamber defined, while the connection to the western chamber remains obscure, as the wall courses closest to the entrance seem to have not survived at this elevation. Progress into deeper layers will continue under the same locus number.

L154/157: L154 ends with the photographing and removal of the lower debris accumulation at the eastern part of the locus. Next layer contains a thick accumulation of slag, received locus number 157. Large slabs of slag along with a large quantity of slag of various sizes. Some of the slag contains fragments of carbonated substance and of copper. No shards at this stage.

10.09.2006

L157: Continued excavation of slag layer. Large quantities of slag of various sizes within ash fill. More ceramics discovered today (ca. 15 shards), including a stamped shard of a vessel which probably included a spout. Fill identification, iron age, several C14 samples collected. Among the finds; pestle and hammerstone. Excavation progresses from the wall of the fort at the west towards the east. Depth 15cm.

L155: Begins excavation of a deeper layer, ca 30 something meters below present level. Excavation begins at northern side. No changes were noticed in the character of the contents of the fill, which still includes scattered stones of various sizes and light colored soft sediment. Ca 7 shards found. Shards probably belonged to cooking pots and storage vessels. Also found: elongated spout like object probably made of ceramic and decorated

with double floral designs. Object's function is unclear. Possibly part of Ottoman pipe, though far more elongated than standard pipes. In addition the object is found relatively deep into the fill sand below the rock pile. It is difficult to explain how a relatively late intrusion could be possible at such a level unless it is an indication to the time of the final earthquake collapse. It should also be noted that no other modern artifacts/sherds of any kind have been found.

L158: New locus represents fill/collapse located in the entrance between the passageway of the gate structure and the NW chamber. Locus opened after what seems to be built line was discovered across the southern end of the entrance. The function of that line is unclear and it may have been part of a late construction complex associated with the columns by the entrance to the passage from the outside (west). Another possibility is that the wall is simply a blocking of the chamber, similar to the blocking also discovered today between the passageway and the SE chamber. Ceramic finds from new locus include a fragment of a jar of the Besseria type.

10/12.10.2006

L155: Concluded the leveling of the second layer excavated into the fill and rocks spread through the passageway between the chambers under the upper clean stones accumulation. No developments beyond what has already been described in previous days. Continues the appearance of scatters of stones within the light colored fill, with very few ceramic finds and occasional appearance of slag. Found also some furnace fragments. All identifiable pottery is Iron Age II-III. Vessels utilitarian: mainly jars,

bowls and cooking pots. With conclusion of excavation of this level the locus will close in order to form distinction with deeper layer. It should be stressed that no change has been detected in the sediment or general character of the fill. Finds also include a few iron objects, possibly fragments of nails, and a hammerstone (rectangle gray stone, two shallow depressions in the middle of each face).

L157: Appearance of slag considerably declines as excavation advances towards the eastern part of the square. Sediment continues gray and ashy. Under that layer appears a red-orange colored sediment, denser and clean of ash. The appearance of this material is uneven in level, deeper towards the north. The material will be excavated under a new locus number after the conclusion of the removal of the gray-ashy material. Finds continue to include scattered pottery in low density. Some of the shards are caked with slag and ashy waste. Belonged to crude vessels, mostly jars and bowls.

L159: New locus representing the fill within the connection between the central passageway of the gate structure and the NE chamber. The fill includes sediment and scatter of rocks, similar to the fill within the central passageway and the two chambers so far excavated. Only ca. 20-30 cm excavated so far, due to the technical difficulty in excavation. No finds.

10.13.2006

L157, L161: Once the ashy slag layer is completely removed L157 closes and new locus opens (L161). By the eastern section a concentration of furnace fragments was detected

and excavated separately. This feature belongs without a doubt to the industrial layer itself and no new locus has been assigned. New locs includes orange-reddish sediment with no industrial waste or ash. So far only finds few fragments of bone. Still, since excavation in 2002 of adjacent area to the north contained cultural material to another 80 cm at least in depth the material is unlikely to represent natural soil.

L155, L160: L155 closes with completion of present layer. Change of locus technical: nature of fill does not change (light-colored sediment, scatters of rocks, few shards, some slag), but division was made in order to detect possible changes in ceramic types and better isolate C14 samples. First layer of L160 as L155 in character and finds. A full preserved entranceway between the central passageway and the NE chamber was discovered along the line of L151 (the southern perimeter wall of the two northern chambers). The entrance represents a narrowing of the passage probably during the latest phase of occupation. Preservation includes the lintel. Possible connection between this structure and the various architectural additions noted by the central passageway's western approach.

10.14.2006

L160: Continues descend into fill of light colored sediment and scatters of rocks. No developments beyond excavation progress mainly at the northern side. Few shards. Layer of light ash found at the center of the locus, though no floors have been defined in context to the layer. Particularly large rocks found at the western part. One of the stones was identified as an anvil containing several shallow round depressions.

L161: Descent into orange-reddish material at the western end produces shows that contrary to the primary impression from yesterday the material does contain remains of industrial activity, mainly copper slag although in lesser quantity and density compared with L157 above. Few shards, Iron Age, mainly body shards with white slip. No trace has been found to later wall attached to the southern wall of the gate structure. Probably has a corner within the balk left between the square excavated in 2002 and the present excavation.

10.15.2006

L160: End of excavation of locus with the completion of the layer and leveling over material distinctly different. Material darker than fill between stones, stones within in far lesser density and contains lenses of ash, probably related to what seems to be a light-colored ash layer, lenses of which were discovered in the center of the passageway. Ceramic, slag finds as in previous days. Several fragments of bone, probably sheep/goat, also discovered. New layer will be excavated under new locus number from tomorrow. Merits notion the discovery of very large cut stones among the collapse, including a long rectangular block and another of triangular shape. Both blocks made of shale.

L158: Continues excavation of the entrance between the NW chamber and the main passageway. No signs for built entrance such as discovered between the passageway and the NE chamber, though L158 is so far filled with dense collapse that may have originated in such structure. Defined and cleaned the eastern face of the entrance which was till now covered with rubble.

L161: End of excavation of locus with discovery of possible surface, or parts of a surface at least on the eastern half. Western half does not seem to have the surface though further excavation is still necessary. The surface is made of packed earth consolidated with small stones. Possible hearths in the NE and SE corners. Few ceramics, some scattered slag, more bones than previously, mainly of seemingly young sheep/goat.

10.16.2006

L163, L165: New locus beneath L160, covers all of the central gate's passageway. Upper layer contains thin accumulation of reddish soil, nearly clean of stones. Appearance of this layer uneven and patched, found mainly in eastern part. Below another layer of densely accumulated debris, mainly shale blocks of various sizes immersed in light colored fill, some ash and some of the lowest layers of the above mentioned reddish material. In the middle of the gateway an accumulation of stones much denser than the general layer of debris and some 20 cm higher in its peak. Recorded as L165, though might also be part of L163, though accidentally denser. At the top of this accumulation large piece of furnace fragment. Finds from both loci include ceramic scatter, some slag and few animal bones, as well as some miscellaneous metal objects. Special finds include small fragment of red-painted shard and a carved object made of chalkstone, ca. 5 cm in height and 2 in width. Object includes shallow upper depression, which may have carried precious stone and 5 legs, four thin legs in each corner and thicker one at the center. All legs found partially broken, no clear information as for original length and full shape of the object. Also unknown is its function. Found by central part of L156 (southern inner wall of the passageway).

L161: Excavation today ends locus, with removal of its last layers on the western part of the square by the inner face of the western perimeter wall of the fort. Exposed now the partially preserved surface first identified yesterday at the eastern part. Here its appearance is fragmentary but clear in patches. Finds include ceramic scatter, bones and some slag. Additional work done on the sharpening and clarification of sections.

10.17/19.2006

L163, L168: Locus 163 closes after final removal of debris, done after photographic recording of full extent of locus. Thin scatter of ceramics and slag. Debris over full extent of the passageway. As the debris were being cleaned a thick layer of greenish-gray ashy fill began to appear by the eastern-central part, by the southern wall of the passageway (L156). The ash was found to be at an uneven distribution both in consistency and elevation. With final removal of debris and closure of L163 begins excavation of ash layer itself under L168. Ash continues to appear in most parts of the passageway, though nowhere in the consistency and substance described above. Within ash scatter of ceramics and some slag, though in similar substance to that found in debris itself. Within ash very few stones and no large debris. Three slabs representing either pavement or benches discovered by walls. One by the northern wall and two at the southern wall. Possible third slab under rich ashy accumulation mentioned above. Ashy layer deposited over layer of reddish soil, which will be excavated under separate number after the final removal of the ash layer.

L166, 167: Represents layer of natural soil with final patches of thin cultural material above. Natural soil found throughout square. On the southern part it is more brittle and slightly darker in color, than in the northern part, where the sediment is sandier and finer, though just as empty of finds. In the eastern part of the square a small and shallow hearth ca. 15 cm in diameter and probably representing single fire was discovered and excavated under separate locus: 167. With final definition of layer as pre-human activity locus and excavation at this part of the area concluded.

10.20.2006

L169: Located by the northern perimeter wall of the gate structure, below what was a layer of debris from the collapse of the wall (excavated in 2002). Top layer includes fill rich in stones, mainly flakes of shale blocks, very few ceramic and copper production waste. Excavated ca. 20 cm of top layer.

L168, 170: Excavation below the lowest layer of debris originating in the fall of the gate structure into the entrance way exposed an occupation layer characterized in intensive fire-related activity. Fill throughout the entrance way contains thick concentrations of ash and other burnt organic material. Ash color varies between white and gray, in various lenses and patches. Burnt organic material appears in brown and black-gray lenses. By the southern wall of the entrance way a thick concentration of light gray ash was exposed. The element rises above the appearance of the ashy layers throughout the entrance way and is related to some kind of industrial activity which included intense use of fire. Evidence to that activity also in the clear burning marks over the face of the wall, whose

large monzo-granite blocks seem to have been severely damaged as consequence. No equivalent appearance of burning marks exist on the northern wall, which, as previously mentioned, is built of much smaller blocks of shale, thus entirely different. Possible restoration of wall made of similar materials as the southern wall and similarly damaged, though unlikely: no evidence for intense fire-related activity along the northern wall. Ash here mainly thick and soft fill, of darker colors more typical to production waste.

Along this wall also discovered two parallel stone built lines in two levels with ca. 25 cm high difference. Meaning of this architectural appearance unclear.

10.21.2006

L168, 171-173: Continues excavation of the thick ashy fill spread throughout the passageway of the gate structure. Most fill consists of mixed ash and brown and black burnt organic material. Less ceramics than yesterday but several diagnostic fragments. Very few pieces of slag. At the western end another patch of hard white ashy fill was discovered, similar to L170, but separated by remains of bench. Layer completely excavated today. The two benches received locus numbers: L172 – northern bench, L173 – southern bench. Both benches include a lower step, better preserved at the northern side. Benches stretched between two entrances into the chambers. Also discovered what seems to be the surface related to the door entrance of the second phase – three large flat rocks found by the entrance immediately to the east of the doorway.

L169: Probe by the northern perimeter wall of the gate structure continues to produce homogenous, almost fine sediment mixed with a very large quantity of fragmented shale. No foundation or robber trenches, while both the gate structure and the western perimeter wall continue to show into lower elevations.

10.22.2006

L174: Replaces L168. Transition due to descent beneath level of benches or shelves located by the southern and northern perimeter walls of the passageway, and related probably to the later phase of utilization of the structure, as the gate function became obsolete. Material does not change: continues appearance of very ashy fill throughout the passageway. Only difference in significant rise on appearance of slag at this level. Among finds small trapezoid pendant made of dark reddish stone. Ceramic appearance as in L168.

L175: Replaces L169 at probe outside the gate structure at the northern side. Change technical: elevation of L169 deep enough to merit cautionary change regardless of obvious changes in the material. Unexcavated today.

L176: Represents the uppermost debris and fill of the southeastern chamber of the gate structure, the excavation of which begins today. Already defined all four perimeter wall. Seems that preservation will be higher at this room than in the two chambers by the northern part of the structure. Debris represented by this locus as in similar levels in the two excavated chambers and in the passageway. Stones of various sizes, limestone and

monzo granite but mainly shale scattered throughout the debris, amongst flakes and light colored sandy fill. Only two ceramic shards and one piece of slag found so far, again corresponding to similar appearances in the other parts of the gate structure. To be noted presence of later rough some structure inserted into the southern part of the gate structure, possibly a grave from the same period as the various stone installation scattered through the fort and outside its western wall. These structures postdate the latest utilization of the site and if contemporaneous with the structure over the chambers may be dated to later than their final destruction by earthquake (?). Structure does not reach SE chambers but partly covers the dividing wall between the two chambers. Built of stones taken from the debris.

10.23.2006

L176: Continues descend into the upper fill/debris inside the NE gate structure. No particular changes in the character of the fill. Finds today include small grinding stone, two pieces of painted pottery and shard with remains of incision made when shard was “leatherhard”.

L177: Opened and closed today. Technical division of L158, which represents the fill/debris accumulated in the entrance space between the NW chamber and the central passageway of the gate structure. No particular changes in the character of the material compared with L158. Closed after discovery of thick ash and probably also slag layer similar to that found in the NW chamber in 2002, possibly separated by what seems to be a small built line between the entrance and the central passageway. Finds include 5 broken

grinding slabs, probably arrived here as debris from walls in which they had been incorporated in secondary use. Few shards, mainly storage jars and cooking pots, as well as some slag, originating probably in lower and yet unexcavated industrial layer.

L174, L170, L171: Work concentrates on sharpening and categorization of various thin and dense industrial ashy layers clearly seen in the sections. All seem to be part of the same industrial activity. No surfaces identified though hard accumulations of ashy-paked earth soil may be what remains of eroded floors. With discovery of threshold of L162 (secondary phase narrowing of entrance between the NE chamber and the central passageway) clear indication is given to a surface. One was tentatively identified, characteristics as described above. Note must be made of disappearance of compact ashy accumulations (L170, L171) under the southern “bench” or industrial shelf, along the southern inner perimeter wall of the central passageway. Fill under the structure is light brown, soft and homogenous in stark contrast to that which appears on both sides beyond the limits of the bench. Not clear yet whether the ashy accumulation postdate the bench, as seems more reasonable, or vice versa. Finds include a relatively large number of shards, animal bones, a hammerstone and a hematite fragment of a possible macehead.

10.24.2006 / 10.26.2006

L174, L179: Once fill over surface below L174 was removed began excavation of L179, which is now known to represent the earliest accumulations of fill in this part of the gate structure. Fill accumulation located above what seems to be a thin (ca. 10 cm) layer of crushed slag that appears only at the easternmost end of the locus, by the balk abutting

the blocking of the connection into the fort. The layer of slag appears under remains of what may have been a surface, represented by a thin layer of red clay in the section. Also related to the architectural remains discovered under bench or shelf L173. These remains seem to form a built line on a west-east axis possibly with a 90 degrees corner of another wall leading into the SE chamber. No architectural association determined between these walls and the gate structure and they may predate it. Final results should be available with final exposure of the chamber whose excavation is now in process. Slag layer located directly over the natural soil that ends the sequence of occupations as discovered in the excavations so far. This last representation could not be effectively isolated but separate C14 samples have been extracted of it. Over and within the upper packed earth and ash surface that begins the excavation of L179 a large quantity of pottery and animal bones were found.

Natural soil appears now in all parts of the central passageway.

L177, L180: Once the fill and stones over the slag layer were removed excavation of the slag layer itself begins under new locus number. The layer is identical to those discovered in 2002 in the adjacent NW chamber: dense accumulation of slag, such as is totally missing at the central passageway, which was apparently not used for large scale industrial activities or the disposal of resulting waste. Among the slag a small quantity of ceramics and animal bones was found.

L181, L182: The two loci represent ashy fill sealed under the packed ash accumulation found along both ends of bench or shelf L173. (packed ash under L170, 171). Excavation

of sealed material parallel to that of L174, until re-unification of whole central passageway under final L179. Few shards and animal bones.

L183: Represents second layer of excavation of the fill and stones accumulation at the SE chamber, after technical closure of the uppermost locus (L176). No changes in the material excavated or in the finds: Still masses of stones and light colored fill, with thin scatter of ceramics and few pieces of slag.

10.27.2006

L183: Continues excavation of SE chamber, with no changes compared with previous days. Fill and stones accumulation, limited amounts of pottery and slag scattered in fill. Among the finds also flint cores with marks of extraction of rough flakes and blades.

L184: Opened and closed today. Represents the entrance space between the central passageway and the SE chamber. During today's excavation the partly collapsed remains of a built narrowing of the entrance have been exposed. Apparently, here too an effort has been made during the secondary phase of utilization of the gate structure to narrow the originally large connection between the central artery of the structure and the service chamber. The collapsed state does not allow full reconstruction but it seems that the blocking concentrated on the western part leaving a narrow elevated passageway at the east. The present state will not be manipulated and excavation of the locus ends. Also

should be noted what seems to be a pavement at the threshold of the chamber. Further determination will be possible once the SE chamber's excavation reaches that level.

L179: Most excavation work today concentrated on the scraping and clarification of the surface/natural soil throughout the central passageway. Thin but hard lenses of ash and crushed slag appear in various locations.

L180: Continues excavation of the entrance between the central passageway and the NW chamber. Slag layer continues to appear though abrupt cessation noted below, in what seems to be a layer of reddish-brown soil.

10.28.2006

L180: Layer consisting of slag and industrial waste continues to appear. Aim is to level the entranceway with the end elevation of the chamber as reached in 2002. In addition, the "step" dividing the entranceway and the central passageway must be defined (entrance, like chambers themselves, seems to be originally dug into the natural soil, about a foot deeper than the passageway).

L183/L187: Excavation of 2nd mixed fill layer in the SE chamber ends with the appearance of a layer consisting of significant lenses of ash and more slag, numbered L187. Continues appearance of painted pottery, mainly black geometric designs over white slip. Among the finds of the day also a collection of 6 cowry shells in a single spot,

possibly the remains of a necklace, the string of which had been decomposed. Such shells have also been found individually in other locations in the room as well as in other parts of the area.

10.29.2006

L180, L188: Layer of crushed slag similar to the one found below the “benches” by the inner perimeter walls of the central passageway discovered below the foundations of the entrance between the central passageway and the NW chamber. The layer does represent activity that predates the gate structure. Designated as L188 and will be excavated in the following days below what seems to be a threshold between the two spaces.

L190: Represents a concentration of furnace fragments probably remaining of a single installation located in the central passageway by the entrance to the NW chamber. The remains of the furnace are scattered through the spot along with slag, much ash and concentrations of burnt botanic materials of which floatation samples will be extracted as well as C14 and chemical analysis. To be excavated tomorrow.

L190: Represents what had been clarified today as an occupation layer within the SE chamber. The occupation is directly related to copper smelting as obvious from the large quantities of slag discovered there along with various hammer stones and a thick layer of ash. By the western perimeter wall of the chamber two lines of slabs were discovered, below the level of the central ash. The feature resembles the “benches” found at the

central passageway but more excavation is necessary for final clarification. Remains of massive fire activity detected by the southern perimeter wall. Among the finds also an above average concentration of ceramics.

10.30.2006

L190: Continues exposure of concentration of furnace fragments and other related industrial activity as found near the entrance from the central passageway into the NW chamber. Continues appearance of thick concentrations of slag and ash. Most larger parts of the furnace exposed and removed today.

L191, L191: With removal of thick ash concentrations full dimensions of the stone installation in the SE chamber now clarified. Installation (L191) consists of tightly laid flat-surface stones covering more than a quarter of the chamber at its SE corner. Limits built of smaller stones, core of larger ones. By the edge of the installation next to the eastern perimeter wall of the chamber a thick though limited concentration of slag represents the industrial utilization of this installation, which may have been built at the original stage of the gate structure and then reutilized for industry. Also possible that it had been originally fitted in during the secondary phase, directly for industrial purposes. Around installation fill consists of ash mixed with reddish soil of the next layer, probably natural soil.

10.31.2006 / 11.04.2006

L188, L193: Excavation ends at this part with the removal of small wall (possibly remains of threshold or later blocking) between the central passageway and the NW chamber. The wall was meant to be only partly removed but its two remaining course collapsed during excavation. The wall (L193) was built on a layer of mainly crushed slag which continues to appear below the walls of the chamber. This is clear indication to copper working activities that predate the construction of the gate structure and possibly the fort itself as a whole. The layer (L188) sits on natural soil as appears throughout the central passageway. The part located below L193 was removed and C14 samples were extracted.

L179: End of excavation with the removal of slag layer near the connection between the central passageway and the NW chamber. All through locus excavation reached natural soil.

L191, L192: End of excavation of the SE chamber with clarification of what now seems to be the remains of a pavement (L191) covering ca. one third of the room in its south-eastern part. Still it seems that the pavement did not cover the whole room as smaller flat stones seem to be lining a core made up of noticeably larger stones. Large amount of slag found over the pavement suggests that it was either built or secondarily used for copper industrial activities. Outside the pavement perimeter the excavation reaches natural soil ca. 15cm deeper.

L175: Excavation of probe outside and by the northern wall of the fort concludes with no visible differences in the material excavated (flight colored fill and stones) from the uppermost level. Paucity of the finds also continues with very few pieces of pottery and slag. Excavation exposed numerous additional courses of the corner between the western perimeter wall of the fort and the northern perimeter wall of the gate structure but did not reach natural soil, which is expected to be at max 1 meter lower and probably less.

L194: Represents remains of what seems to be a pavement of flat stones located at the inner entrance of the fort. Extreme stones of pavement penetrate below the walls of the fort structure indicating that the pavement either belonged to the same phase or predates it. Pavement appears throughout the width of the entrance. Pavement exposed but not removed.

L195: Represents the blocking of the access between the SE chamber and the central passageway. Blocking was probably partial and covered only the western part of the access. Eastern part seems to have had a shelf but no full blocking. The blocking leans eastwards but never totally collapsed. It is a definite addition to the original entrance, as its stones abut the original structure. Blocking cleaned and photographed but not excavated or removed.

END OF EXCAVATION OF AREA A – SE, NE AND NW CHAMBERS EXCAVATED
AS WELL AS CENTRAL PASSAGEWAY. SW CHAMBER LEFT UNEXCAVATED.
PROBES EXCAVATED IN ALL DIRECTIONS OF THE STRUCTURE.

