**Chapter 1 – The Early Bronze Age**

Amnon Ben-Tor

*A: Architecture*

 A corner of two walls, probably belonging to an Early Bronze Age dwelling (L. 12-345, Plan XXX),was found immediately beneath a tripartite Iron Age building (a storehouse, one of two uncovered in Area M (Chapter 4, pp. XXX, Plan XXX)).

The walls, about 1.8 meters thick, are built of fieldstones and covered with a thick layer of light brown plaster. Widespread use of plaster is typical of Early Bronze Age architecture at Hazor: walls, floors, benches, and various installations covered in plaster have been noted in all three areas where remnants of this period have been uncovered:Area A: Yadin's excavations: L. 392 (Hazor III-IV [Text], p.2 Plan I; Hazor III-IV [Plates] Plate IV;2-4); L. 672 (Hazor V, p.19, Plan II.1, Photo II.8); the renewed excavations: L.80058 (Hazor VII, p.8, Plan I.I, Photo I.1- I.2); Area L**:** L. 1141 (Hazor V, Plan III.5, Phot. III.7); Area M, L. 12-354 (Hazor VIII, Plan XXX**)**.

*B: The slope at the site*

 The floor level of the Early Bronze Age corner, L. 12-345, which is 222.99, lies beneath that of the Iron Age storehouse (level 223.80), yet is above that of later Middle-Late Bronze Age, or even Iron Age strata. The floor level of the Iron Age stelae complex (L.16-325), which is located nearly 10 meters further north and down the slope, is 222.50 **(**Plan xxx**),** that is, 0.50 meters lower than the level of the Early Bronze Age floor. The floor level of the entrance to the administrative palace, L. 18-32 is 218.90 **(**Plan XXX[3/10] **),** runs some 5 meters below the Early Bronze Age level (Loc. 12-345) over a distance of 35 meters and down the slope**.**

 The reason for this seemingly illogical phenomenon (in which remnants of later periods are located below those of earlier periods) is that the northern part of Area M, where these remains were uncovered, lies on the northern slope of the site and faces the lower city of Hazor.

 The same phenomenon can be observed in all three areas of excavation (A, L, and M) where Early Bronze Age remains were uncovered. In Area A, the floor level of the Early Bronze Age plastered installation L. 672 is 226.80 (Hazor V, Plan II.1, Photo II.8), that is, higher than that of the Late Bronze Age floor of the Northern Temple, L.562-565, which is located some 5 meters down the slope at level 226.30 (Hazor V, Plan II.6), that is, a 0.50 meter lower than the Early Bronze Age floor (L.672) to its west.

Area L: The floor level of the Early Bronze Age dwelling L. 1141 is 226.60 (Hazor V, Photo III.7-8, Section III.1), while that of the Iron Age IIA casemate wall, L. 1001, L.1020, is 226.45-225.60, (Hazor V, Photos III.27-28, Plan III.21, Section III.2). The Early Bronze Age floor is thus 0.20 to 1.00 meter higher than the Iron Age IIA floors. The difference in height between the floors of the Iron Age IIA casemate and that of the Early Bronze Age dwelling can be explained by the fact that the former is located some 30-35 meters down the slope from the Early Bronze Age dwelling.

As for Area M, see above.

 These Early Bronze Age strata represent the earliest occupation of Hazor and thus the original profile of the site. No data is available on the western slope of the site since no excavations were carried out in this area, where only the Iron Age strata are still visible. The remnants uncovered in Area A reveal that the eastern slope was fairly moderate, whereas the floor level of Early Bronze Age Loc. 675, which lies on the western, higher part of the slope, is 226.35, and that of Loc. 80058, which lies some 50 meters down the slope, is 224.01, that is, 2.34 meters lower. By contrast, the northern and western slopes of the site are rather steep; there is a difference of 1 meter in height over a distance of some 25-30 meters in Area L, and a 5-meter difference in height over a distance of about 35 meters in Area M.

 An outdoor staircase constructed in the Middle Bronze Age led from the lower city up the slope to Hazor's acropolis (PPXXXX, Plan YYYY, Photo ZZZZ). This staircase was blocked during the Late Bronze Age, when a different one was constructed in its stead (PPAAA, Plan BBB, Photo CCC).

*C: The ceramic assemblage :*

 A relatively rich assemblage of sherds was found on what was preserved of the building's floor at height 222.99/90 (L.12-345), dating the structure firmly to the Early Bronze Age. A thin line of small fieldstones runs to the east of W.12-312, and several larger stones scattered haphazardly nearby may represent another architectural feature, L.12-344, of which very little remains. Early Bronze Age pottery has also been found here.

 The Early Bronze Age pottery found in these two loci finds close parallels in the pottery uncovered in areas A and L (Yadin's excavations: Hazor III-IV [Text]:discussion, pp. 2-5, Hazor III-IV [Plates], Plates CLIV- CLV; Hazor V

Strata 11-10, discussion on pp. 17-21, Figs. II.1-II.4; ibid., discussion on pp. 187-

193, Phases 14-10, Figs III.2-III.4). Early Bronze Age Pottery was also

found during the renewed excavations in Area A (see Hazor VII, discussion on pp.147-149, Figs. 5.II-5.V).

 The division of Early Bronze Age III into three sub-phases, namely, a pre-Khirbet Kerak-ware phase, a Khirbet-Kerak phase, and a post-Khirbet-Kerak phase, as proposed by Yadin (1972,119-120), can no longer be sustained (see R. Greenberg Hazor V, 21; Y.Garfinkel*,* ibid. 191). The two-phase division of Early Bronze Age III, also suggested by Yadin, seems a better fit for the situation as demonstrated by all three areas of excavations.

 A few isolated sherds found in these assemblages (see A. Ben-Tor, Hazor VII, p. 149, Fig. 5.I, Hazor VIII, Fig. XXX in the present volume…) may belong to an earlier Early Bronze Age II stratum.