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The Finds from Cave 39C West of Ḥorbat Barfiliya, Modi'in

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The Pottery

During the excavation of Cave 39C, only small pottery sherds were retrieved, most of them very eroded. They represent at least four different phases of occupation during the Early Bronze Age[1] (see Table 2). Although the cave has very clear stratigraphy, the pottery finds do not always fit the sequence discerned by the excavators (see Kogan-Zehavi and Zelinger, this volume). We must therefore conclude that not all of the sherds were discovered *in situ*, and consequently, have chosen to present the assemblage typologically and chronologically.[2]

Bowls
Five types of bowls were found in the cave.

V-Shaped Bowl (Fig. 1:1). Such medium-sized, handmade V-shaped bowls with straight walls and a flat base appear in the southern Levant at the very beginning of EB IA (Yekutieli and Gophna 1994: Fig. 12:16; Braun 1996:89–92; 2000: Fig. 7.3:4).

Bowl with Decorated Rim (Fig. 1:2). A small fragment of a rope-decorated rim seems to conform to the tradition of decorated rims from the early EB IA in the south of the country (Braun 1996: Fig. V.C6/1:6; Yekutieli 2000).

Crude Globular Bowl (Fig. 1:3). This bowl appears from EB IA through EB IB, and is common in the Shephelah and the northern Negev (Tufnell 1958: Pls. 56:34, 57:52; Alon and Yekutieli 1995: Fig. 23:20).

Hemispherical Bowl (Fig. 1:4). This bowl has a rounded folded rim and thick walls. It appears in the southern assemblages, especially in EB IA (Yekutieli and Gophna 1994: Fig. 12:10), and continues throughout EB IB (e.g., Mazar and Miroschedji 1996:15, Fig. 17:2).

Carinated Bowl (Fig. 1:5). This bowl belongs to the well-known group of small carinated bowls defined as a distinctive family by Beck (1985). It is widespread in the center of the country and was probably produced at Tel Afeq. The bowls date to the very end of EB IB and EB II.

Platters (Fig. 1:6, 7)
Two fragments of platters were recovered in L345 (Fig. 1:6, 7) and a third in L353. They have horizontal flat rims and the remains of red paint both inside and out. These are non-metallic platters, characteristic of EB II (e.g., Esse 1991: Pl. 2B–E; Amiran et al. 1978: Pl. 8:1–3), but which begin to appear toward the end of EB IB (e.g., Lower Ḥ. 'Illin Braun 1996: Fig. V.C.11:3, 5).

Loop-Handled Jugs/Cups (Fig. 1:8–11)
Of the loop-handled jugs or cups, two (Fig. 1:8, 9) display a punctated decorative motif on the rim, next to the handle. They are generally dated to the beginning of EB IB (Tel 'Erani C horizon; Eisenberg and Sklar, in prep.).

Short-Necked Jars (Fig. 1:12–14)
This type of jar begins to appear during EB IA (e.g., Yekutieli and Gophna 1994: Fig. 12:1; Alon and Yekutieli 1995: Fig. 23:1). They

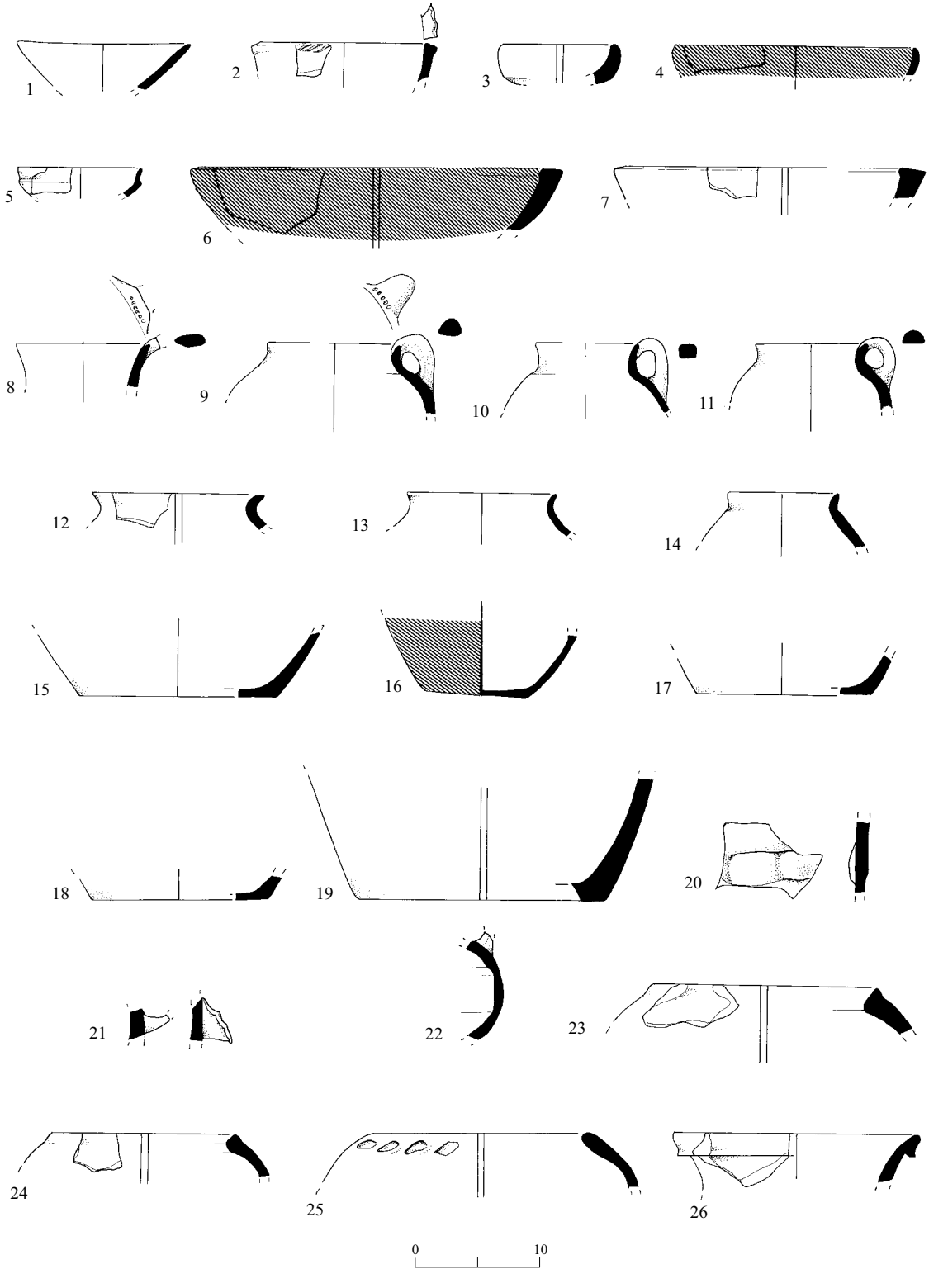

Fig. 1. Pottery from Cave 39C.

◂ **Fig. 1**

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Form	Description
1	3113/1	356	Bowl	Very pale brown (10YR 7/4) clay; pale brown (10YR 6/3) core; small white and gray grits
2	3111/1	357	Bowl	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; coarse gray and white grits
3	3085/1	349	Bowl	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; gray (7.5YR 6/0) core; coarse white grits
4	3113/8	356	Bowl	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; very small white grits; red slipped
5	3072/2	345	Bowl	Reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay; light reddish yellow (5YR 6/4) core; small white grits; red burnish
6	3083/3	345	Platter	Very pale brown (10YR 8/4) clay; gray (10YR 6/1) core; very few coarse gray grits; painted red
7	3072/1	345	Platter	Very pale brown (10YR 8/4) clay; gray (10YR 6/1) core; very few coarse beige grits; painted red
8	3085/2	349	Loop-handled jug/cup	Dark brown (7.5YR 5/8) clay, pinkish gray (7.5YR 6/2) core; well fired
9	3107/3	355	Loop-handled jug/cup	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; gray (7.5YR 6/0) core; gray grits
10	3107/2	355	Loop-handled jug/cup	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; dark brown (2.5YR 5/6) core; well fired
11	3097/1	349	Loop-handled jug/cup	Reddish yellow (7.5YR 7/8) clay; small white, gray and shiny grits
12	3113/2	356	Jar	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; medium shiny and white grits; small white grits
13	3113/3	356	Jar	Very pale brown (10YR 8/4) clay; light gray (10YR 7/2) core
14	3107/4	355	Jar	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 8/6) clay; pinkish gray (7.5YR 7/2) core; medium white and gray grits
15	3113/4	356	Jar base	Pink (7.5YR 7/3) clay; light gray (7.5YR 7/0) core; gray grits
16	3107/1	355	Jar base	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; dark gray (10YR 4/1); few small white grits
17	3111/2	357	Jar base	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/8) clay; few small white grits
18	3111/3	357	Jar base	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/8) clay; few small white grits
19	3090/1	345	Pithos base	Red (2.5YR 5/6) clay; small gray grits
20	3097/1	345	Pithos, applied decoration	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; light gray (7.5YR 7/0) core; white grits; white wash?
21	3111/4	357	Ledge handle	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/8) clay; light gray (7.5YR 7/0) core; gray and white grits
22	3107/5	355	Amphoriskos	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; gray and shiny grits
23	3085/3	349	Holemouth	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; gray (7.5YR 5/0) core; coarse gray and white grits; white wash?
24	3107/7	357	Holemouth	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; coarse gray and white grits; white wash?
25	3101/1	353	Holemouth	Pink (7.5YR 7/4) clay; gray (7.5YR 5/0) core; coarse gray and red grits
26	3083/1	345	Pithos rim	Reddish-yellow (7.5YR 6/8) clay; dark gray (7.5YR 4/0) core; few medium white grits

were also found during the early phase of EB IB (Eisenberg and Sklar, in prep.), sometimes featuring red-to-orange vertical stripes over a white wash (Mazar and de Miroschedji 1996: Fig. 18:13–19; Yekutieli 2000:132, Fig. 8.7:5, 6).

The four bases illustrated here (Fig. 1: 15–18), as well as most of the others, could not be assigned to any specific phase within the Early Bronze Age. Likewise, a ledge handle (Fig. 1:21), probably belonging to a small jar, can only be generally associated with the Early Bronze Age.

Pithoi (Fig. 1:19, 20)
A base of a pithos (Fig. 1:19) probably dates to EB I. In addition, a rope-decorated sherd (Fig. 1:20) is most likely part of the lower body of a pithos. It shows traces of a white wash, therefore suggesting a date in EB IB (Eisenberg and Sklar, in prep; Alon and Yekutieli 1995: Fig. 16:6) or EB II (Amiran et al. 1978: Pls. 39–41).

Amphoriskos (Fig. 1:22)
A body fragment and part of a handle belong to an amphoriskos made of coarse ware. It has a globular body and the handle is horizontally pierced on its shoulder. This type could be ascribed to late EB IB (Amiran et al. 1978: Pl. 10:4; Alon and Yekutieli 1995: Fig. 21:2; Elliot Braun pers. comm.).

Holemouth Jars (Fig. 1:23–25)
Three sherds of holemouth jars were found, two of which have indented rims and are probably from EB IA or the beginning of EB IB (e.g., Mazar and de Miroschedji 1996: Fig. 19:3). The third sherd (Fig. 1:25) has a rounded rim with incised decoration near it. This type of decoration is a hallmark of EB IA (Elliot Braun, pers. comm.).

Middle Bronze Age IIB Pithos (Fig. 1:26)
An everted rim of a pithos with an opening measuring c. 20 cm must be ascribed to MB IIB. This type of pithos, with small variations, appears in a number of sites in the country (e.g., Seger 1974: Fig. 3:9; Cole 1984: Pl. 33c; Pritchard 1963: Fig. 23:86; Edelstein 1998: Fig. 4.6:11,13; Sellers 1969: Fig. 2:16).

THE FLINT ASSEMBLAGE

The excavation of Cave 39C yielded 198 flint artefacts. Due to the small size of the assemblage, the uneven retrieval procedure, and the absence of systematic sieving, we did not subdivide the assemblage according to the stratigraphy. Rather, we have discussed only the diagnostic pieces, and presented a summary of the flint finds in Table 1.

The area of Modi‘in consists of low hills and is part of the Ramallah anticline (Buchbinder and Sneh 1984). The hills are thick Senonian limestone layers overlaid with flint exposures. Huge blocks of raw flint are visible on the surface and are associated with the Meshash Formation. These blocks are the main source of the flint artefacts. The flint color ranges from gray to light brown, and the artefacts are mainly of low to medium quality.

In all the cave strata, the primary elements and the flakes dominated the debitage while the blades were present in low quantities. The debris included large natural chunks found in the vicinity of the cave. Most of those items bear a white patina characterizing the raw

Table 1. Flint Waste Frequencies

Type	N	%
Primary elements	33	28.9
Flakes	60	52.6
Blades	16	14.1
CTE	5	4.4
Total Debitage	*114*	*100.0*
Chunks	35	53.0
Chips	31	47.0
Total Debris	*66*	*100.0*
Debitage	114	57.6
Debris	66	33.3
Cores	8	4.0
Tools	10	5.1
Total	*198*	*100.0*

material at Modi'in. Seven of the eight cores found are flake cores (Fig. 2:1); the eighth is a single platform core used for the production of bladelets (Fig. 2:2).

Of the 16 blades, two are Canaanean, made of fine-grained, high quality raw material, probably of Eocenian origin (Fig. 3:1, 2). It is worth mentioning that one of these blades is typical of EB IV assemblages (Fig. 3:2). Although distally broken, it is a long specimen (12.5 cm), and its width (2.6 cm) is greater than that of earlier Canaanean blades (Rosen 1997:111).

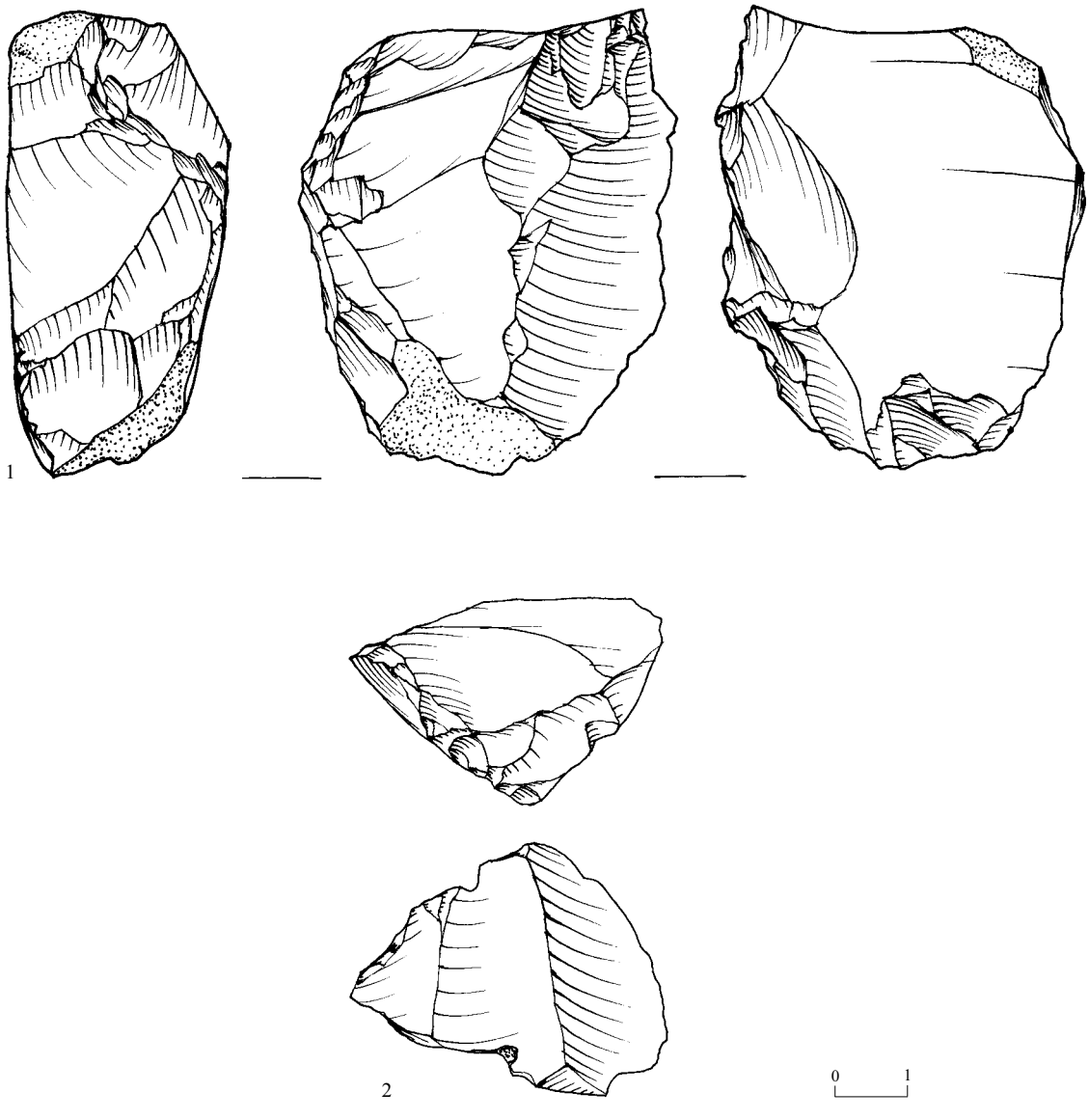

Fig. 2. Flint artifacts from Cave 39C.

No.	Reg No.	Locus	Description
1	3109	355	Flake core
2	3097	348	Bladelet core

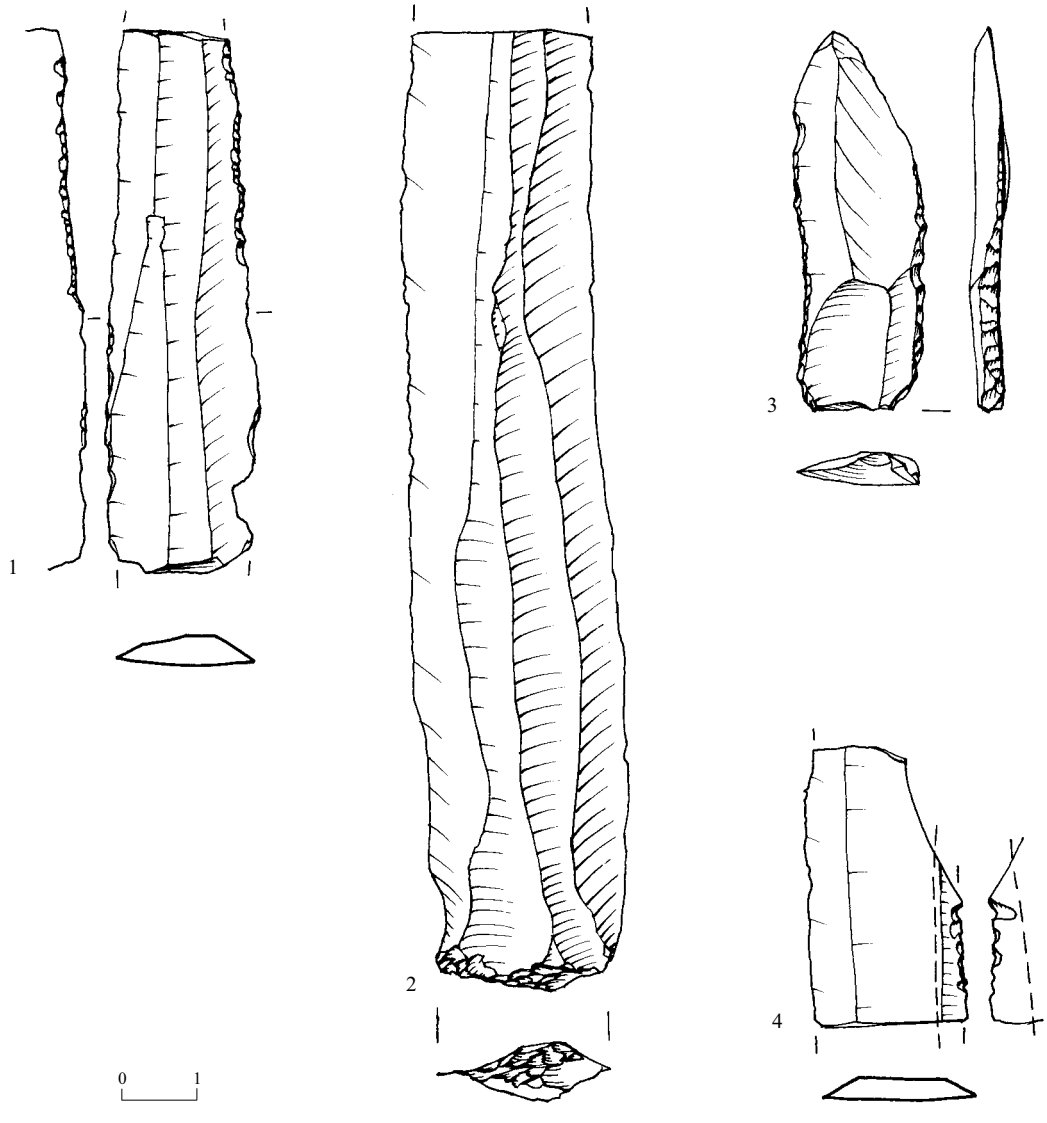

Fig. 3. Flint tools from Cave 39C.

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Description
1	3073	345	Canaanean blade
2	3081	345	Canaanean blade
3	3091	349	Retouched blade
4	3092	342	Canaanean sickle blade

Tools

The ten tools discovered constitute circa 5% of the total artefacts. Six are from Stratum V and the rest from Stratum III (see Table 1). Eight of the tools are ad hoc tools: four retouched flakes, two notches, and two denticulates. The other two specimens are a retouched blade (Fig. 3:3) and a Canaanean sickle blade (Fig. 3:4), both

from Stratum V. The retouched blade was made of brownish-colored Meshash flint; a limited semi-abrupt retouch is visible on its back. The Canaanean sickle blade is a fragment, broken distally and proximally. Its working edge has fine denticulation and shows a gloss.

A COPPER DAGGER

A simple copper dagger in a good state of conservation, was found in L350 (Fig. 4). It has a lozenge-shaped blade and a short slightly rectangular tang with two rows of two rivets each. The overall length of the dagger is 20.7 cm. The maximum width of the blade is 1.8 cm, and the maximum thickness is 0.4 cm.

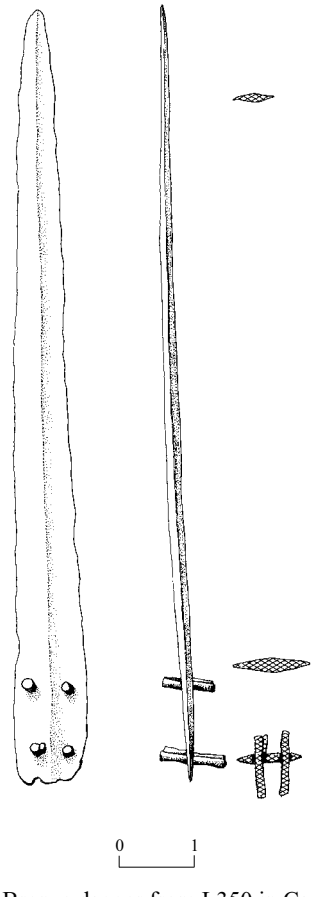

Fig. 4. Bronze dagger from L350 in Cave 39C.

The dagger belongs to a group classified as Type 2 by Philip (1989:103–104, 389–398, Fig. 27). The type was common throughout the country during the Early Bronze Age, including EB IV. Similar daggers dated to EB I and EB II–III were found at Ma'barot (Porath, Dar and Appelbaum 1985: Fig. 81:4), and at Bab edh-Dhra' (Schaub and Rast 1989:447, Fig. 258:1). At Ramat Ha-Nadiv a similar dagger was found in Tomb 701 (Greenberg 2000:588, Fig. 6:5), dated to EB III or EB IV. Further parallels from EB IV contexts include Ha-Zore'a (Meyerhof 1989: Fig. 33:98), Ma'barot (Porath, Dar and Appelbaum 1985: Fig. 86:3) and recently at Qula (Milevski 2001:63*).

DISCUSSION

The finds from the seven strata in Cave 39C attest to at least four main phases of occupation (Table 2). Three of them can be substantiated by the pottery: (1) the beginning of EB IA; (2) the beginning of EB IB, analogous to phase C at Tel 'Erani; and (3) the end of EB IB and/or EB II. The fourth phase is represented by Burial 350, and is probably dated to a period between EB II and EB IV, on the basis of the dagger. No pottery can be dated specifically to EB IV; however, the Canaanean blade in Fig. 3:2 can probably be attributed to that period.

All of the pottery from the Early Bronze Age phases in Cave 39C is characterisitic of the central and southern regions of the country. The rim of the pithos dated to MB IIB must be considered intrusive.

Most of the flint artefacts are locally made of Meshash flint outcrops except the Canaanean blades and the Canaanean sickle blade. They were probably imported to the site from Eocenian outcrops located in the area of Gezer (Rosen 1997:110).

Table 2. Distribution of Finds According to Strata

Stratum	Loci	Pottery	Flint	Metal
Top soil	329, 332, 340			
VII	342		EB	
VI	343, 344			
V	345, 346	EB IB2–EB II, MB IIB	EB IV?	
IV	350			EB IV?
III–IV	348			
III	349, 352, 353, 354	EB IA–EB IB1, EB IB, EB IB2–EB II	Chal., EB IA1?	
II–III	355	EB IA, EB IA–EB IB1, EB IB, EB IB2		
II	356, 357	EB IA1, EB IA, EB I		
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NOTES

[1] For the chronology of the EB I, see Yekutieli 2000: Table 8.1.

[2] The provenience of each item illustrated in this report is provided in the plate descriptions.

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