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The Flint Assemblage from Naḥal Rimmonim

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A total of 146 flint artifacts were collected in the Naḥal Rimmonim excavation (see Covello-Paran, this volume). The collection was very selective; c. 20% of the artifacts (n = 29) are tools. The stratigraphical sequence at Naḥal Rimmonim presents sparse remains dating to Early Bronze Age I–III, the Intermediate Bronze Age (Strata III, II), and Middle Bronze Age II (Stratum I).

The Early Bronze Age tools (n = 6; 20.7%) include products of the Canaanean industry (Rosen 1997): Canaanean sicke blades (n = 3) and a retouched blade (n = 1). The sickle blades have either one or two working edges exhibiting sickle sheen and are usually finely denticulated (Fig. 1:1, 2). They are made on fine-grained raw material, of Eocene origin, light gray and beige in color. The retouched blade is similar, with no trace of gloss. The Early Bronze Age tools include two additional ad hoc tools; both are retouched flakes.

Of the ten tools (34.5%) identified as belonging to the Intermediate Bronze Age (EB IV) four are sickles. This tool type is characteristic of post-EB III flint assemblages. The industry is still the characteristic Canaanean of the Early Bronze Age (Rosen 1983; 1997). The sickles, usually shaped on large and wide blades, were produced to serve as reaping knives (Fig. 2:1, 2). The ad hoc tools include four retouched flakes and two scrapers.

The Middle Bronze Age tools consist of thirteen specimens (44.8%), six of them sickle elements. The Middle Bronze Age sickles differ from those of EB IV in both shape and production technology. Some were formed

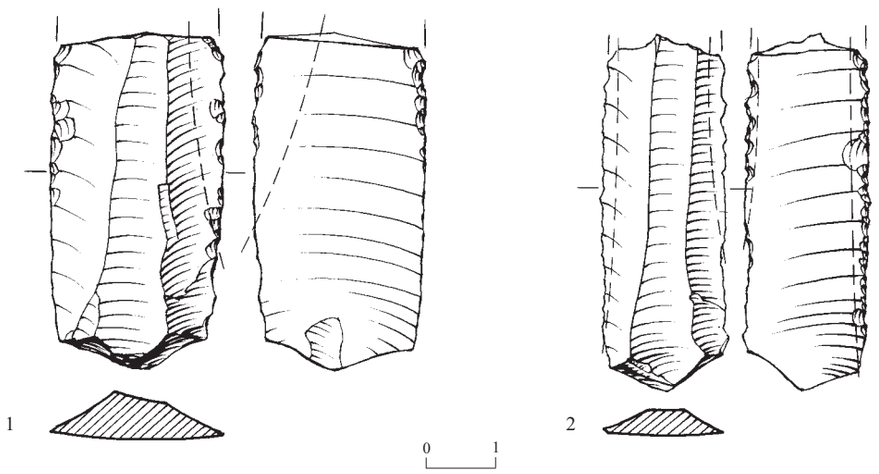

Fig. 1. Canaanean sickle blades from the Early Bronze Age.

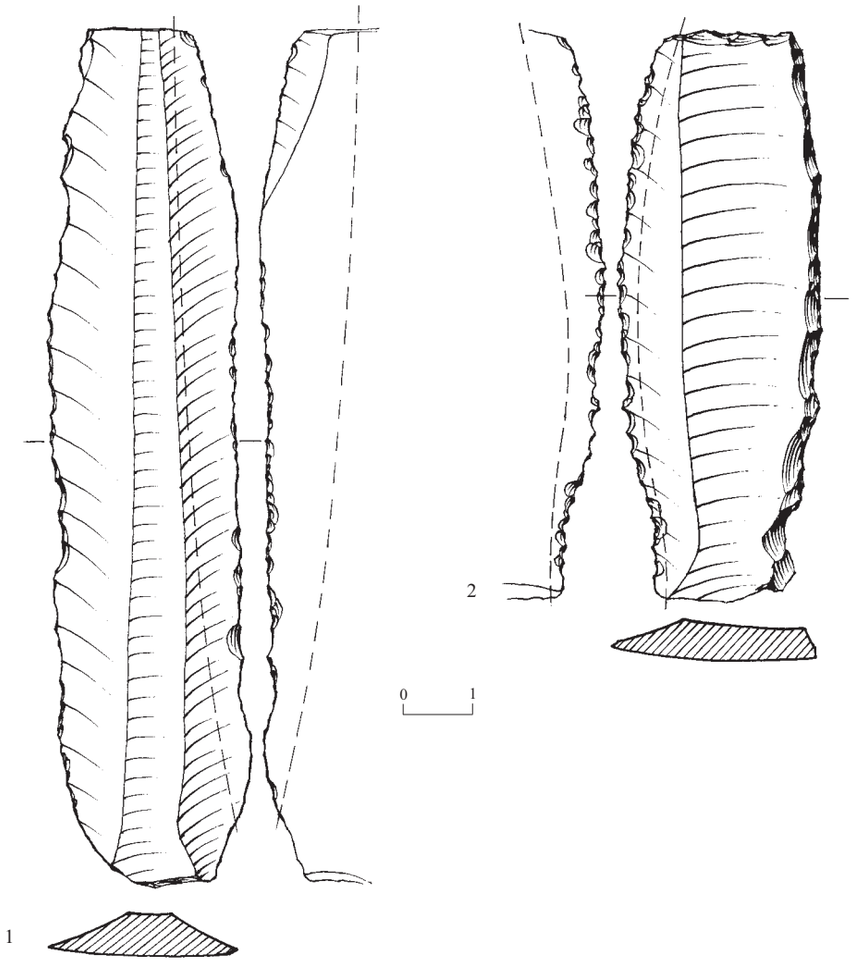

Fig. 2. Sickles from the Intermediate Bronze Age.

from blade blanks and some from flake blanks. The sickle segments are rectangular (Fig. 3:2), trapezoidal or triangular (Fig. 3:1). Several items were presumably hafted; the triangles (Fig. 3:1) were most probably placed at the tip of the haft (Rosen 1986; Bankirer 2005). Therefore, each piece was retouched on one edge to fit in the haft, while the opposite edge was used as a working edge. The working edge was most frequently denticulated (such as Fig. 3:1), while the opposite edge shows various treatment, such as substantial thinning (e.g., Fig. 3:2), abrupt or semi-abrupt retouch, regular or partial retouch, or no retouch at all. Truncations are very common, on both ends of the element. The remaining tools from Middle Bronze Age contexts are ad hoc, with no characteristics specific to the period.

In conclusion, the flint collection from Naḥal Rimmonim consists of typical tools spanning a long period of time. Approximately 79% of the tools are assigned a post-Early Bronze Age date.

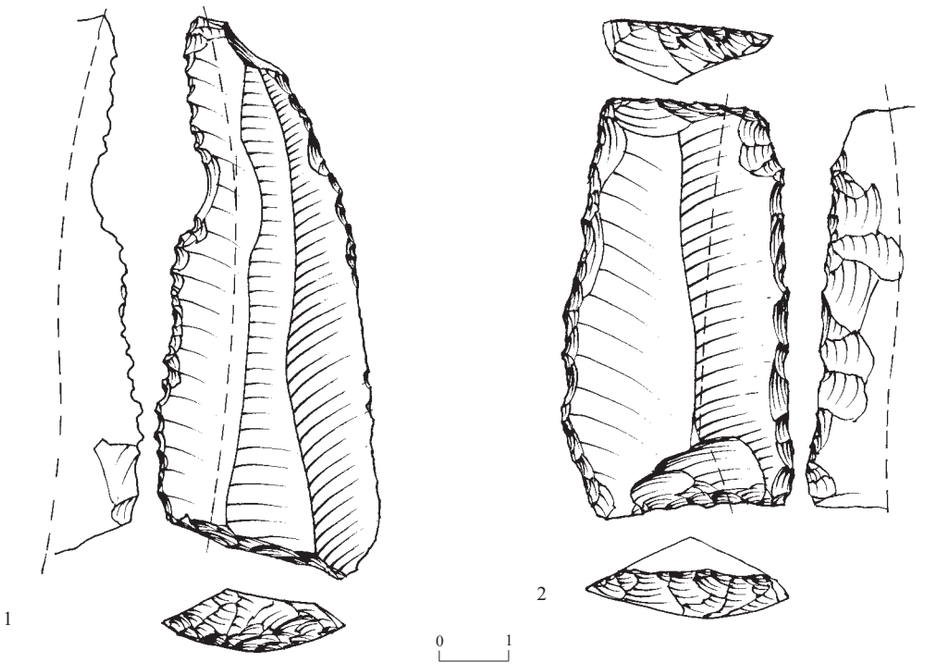

Fig. 3. Sickles from the Middle Bronze Age.

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