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KABAZI II: THE 70 000 YEARS SINCE THE LAST INTERGLACIAL

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Chapter
15

Recurrent Butchering Activities at Kabazi II, Level III/2

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The occupation deposits of Kabazi II, III 2 accumulated under south-boreal forest steppe conditions during MIS 5a (Gerasimenko 1999, 2005). Bone clusters in this level reach a thickness of up to 15 cm in some square metres. According to faunal remains, level III/2 represents a clear palimpsest in which Neanderthals came to hunt, especially small herds of *Equus hydruntinus*, on several occasions (Pathou-Mathis, Chabai 2005). The artefact distribution displays no clear concentration, but there are several square metres with a higher density of artefacts: 8Λ, 7M, 7H, 5H, 4H (Fig. 15-1).

Typological and Technological Features of Kabazi II, Level III/2

A total of 74 pieces were analysed and sorted into raw material units. The assemblage comprises 13 blanks with retouched edges, though only 10 are classified as formal tools (Fig. 15-2); three pieces displaying only a slightly lateral retouch which may have resulted from sediment movement rather than from usage or intentional manipulation. The tool inventory is dominated by various types of side-scraper, including five simple side-scrapers and two double side-scrapers. Furthermore, the assemblage comprises one notched piece and one denticulate. The remaining four tools are surface shaped, made mostly on big flakes, and with facial retouch by a soft hammer; two are bifacial tools: 1 bifacial point with a partly surface shaped ventral side, and 1 bifacial convergent scraper. The latter shows traces of long usage, featuring secondary facial retouch and resharpening by lateral thinning. Two further blanks were surface shaped only on their dorsal sides: one simple side-scraper and one *déjeté*. All tools in the assemblage were made on simple flakes, with the exception of one bifacial whose blank type is unknown, and one notched piece made on a flake from surface shaping (bifacial by-product).

The dominant blank classes are simple flakes (27 pieces), and chunks (26 pieces) (Fig. 15-3). Other blank types include an *éclat débordant naturel*, two crested flakes, one transversal flake, and eight chips. In addition there are five flakes probably from surface shaping, which were struck from bifacial tools or preforms using the soft hammer technique. The only core in the assemblage comprises a broken or exhausted bifacial tool from which several blanks were struck using a non-distinct method or concept.

In fact, it is unclear whether there was a regular blank production in level III/2 at all; a number of the flakes in the inventory being merely the by-products from the decortication and formatting of preforms. This would also explain the high percentage of cortical flakes and chunks. Due to these operational steps having been carried out using a hard hammer technique, these flakes do not show the significant features of bifacial thinning flakes. Also two discarded preforms indicate a focus on preform/bifacial production. The high number of chunks shows that some raw pieces with many hidden fissures were tested and decorticated on the site.

The rather small assemblage of level III/2, with its relatively high percentage of surface shaped tools, has been classified as belonging to the Crimean Micoquian of Starosele or Ak-Kaya facies (Chabai 1998b, 2004c).

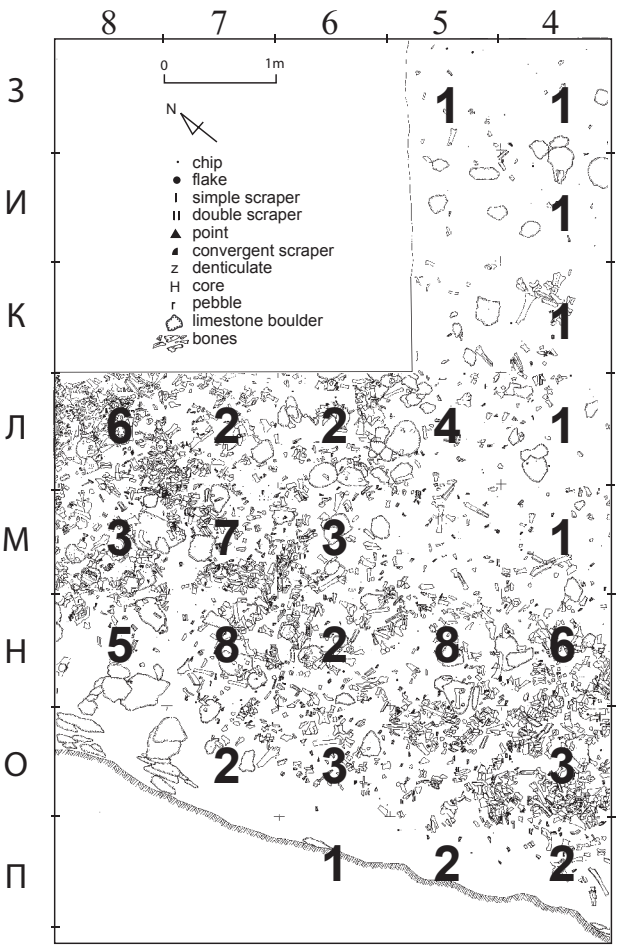

Fig. 15-1 Kabazi II, level III/2: distribution of all artefacts, examined by transformation analysis.

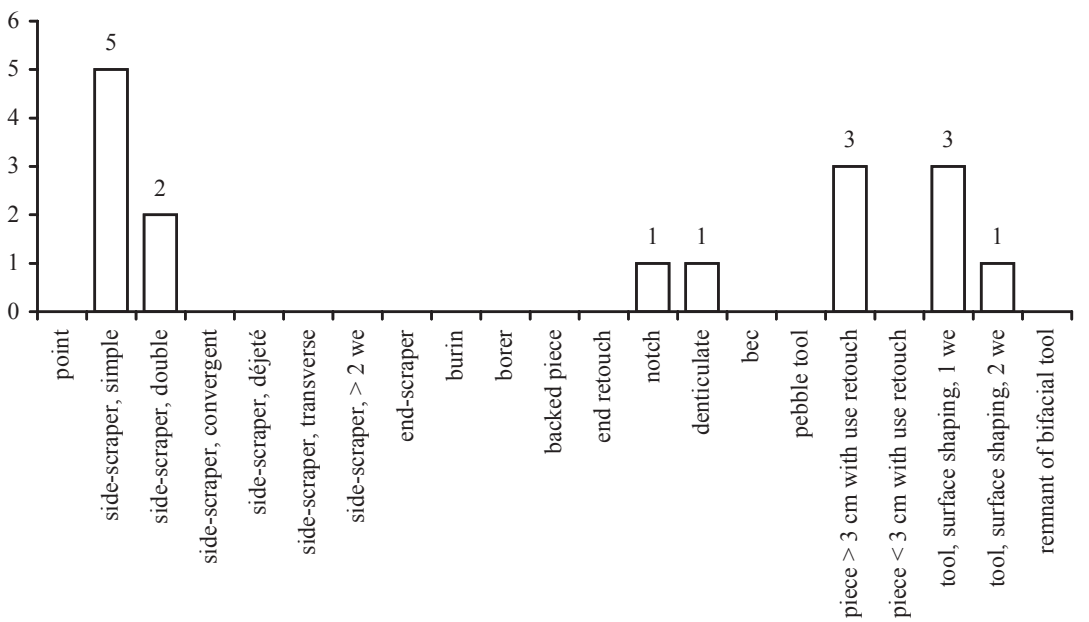

Fig. 15-2 Kabazi II, level III/2: frequency of tools (pieces with use-retouch are not counted as formal tools).

The Sorting in Raw Material Units

The 74 pieces from the assemblage of level III/2, of which seven artefacts were excluded from further analysis, they being either too patinated or too small for a positive identification of the raw material in question (so-called "sorting rest"), were assigned to 23 raw material units, comprising between 1 (RMU: 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 17, 20, 22) and 8 pieces (RMU: 19) (Fig. 15-4).

A total of 75% of the raw material units comprise only 4 or less artefacts. This is indicative of a rather low flint knapping activity, with only short sections of any one operational chain having taken place upon the excavated area of this level. The colour of the artefacts differs from a dark grey to a lighter grey, which is indicative of an origin in the Bodrak River valley. Consideration of macroscopic differences observed in the inclusions and schlieren of the artefacts enabled a secure assignment of artefacts to real working pieces, i.e. each of the artefacts of an RMU is made of the same raw material, and most probably originates from one and the same nodule. Two workpieces comprise brown or honey coloured artefacts from a different outcrop, possibly from the Kasha Valley. The cortical flakes of the different workpieces show that in the majority of cases (90%) primary raw material was used (Fig. 15-5). The shape of the nodules, where this was still recordable, were mainly flat or *plaquette* (Fig. 15-6).

Transformation Sections of the Workpieces

Isolated artefacts – transformation sections: Tw, Cw, Ei, TT

In 8 cases the RMU comprises one single artefact only (Fig 15-7 and 15-8, *1*), five of which display the transformation section **Tw**. These artefacts were imported to the site as already finished tools, which were then discarded there without any further modification having occurred. Three of the tools are surface shaped and edge retouched pieces, and include a bifacial surface shaped convergent scraper (RMU 1), a dorsal surface shaped transversal scraper (RMU 3), and one dorsal surface shaped point with thinned ventral side (RMU 10). The blanks of the latter tools

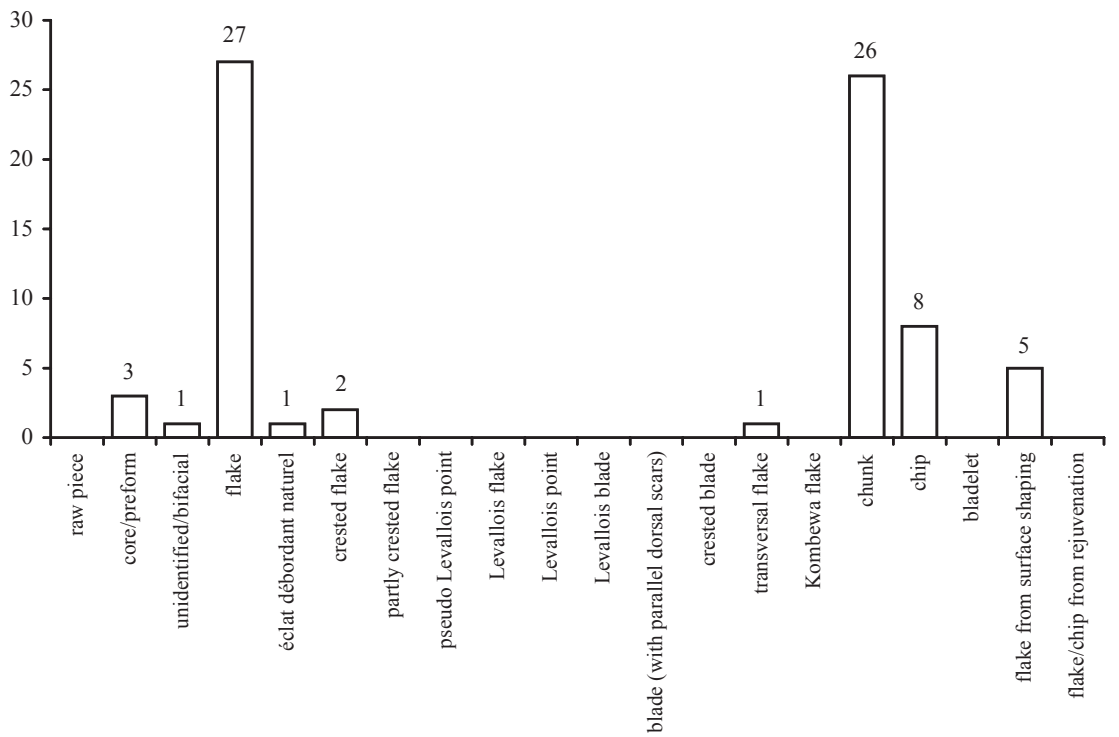

Fig. 15-3 Kabazi II, level III/2: frequency of blank types.

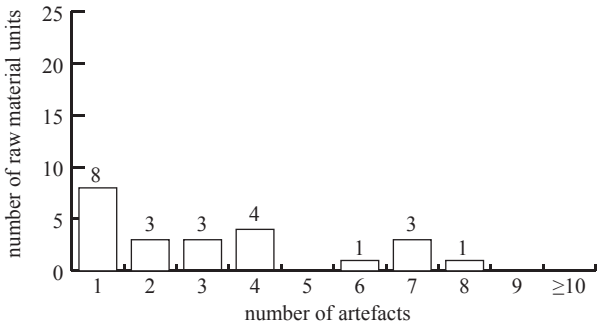

Fig. 15-4 Kabazi II, level III/2: frequency of artefacts in raw material units.

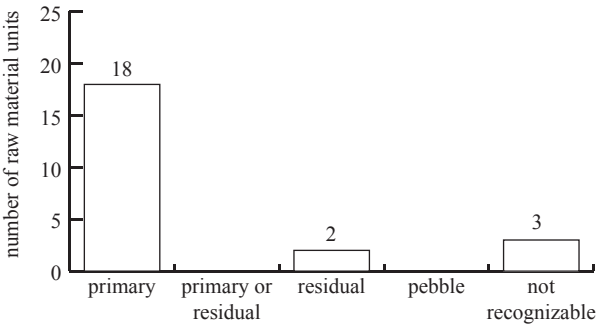

Fig. 15-5 Kabazi II, level III/2: frequency of workpieces, according to raw material source.

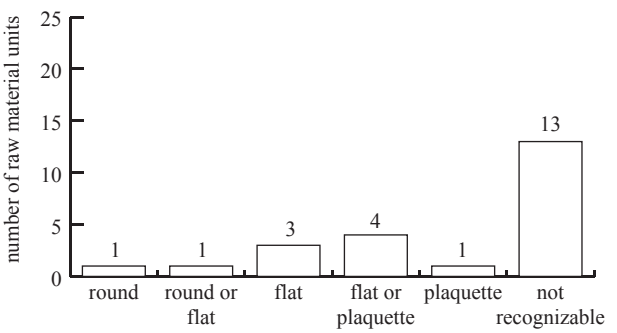

Fig. 15-6 Kabazi II, level III/2: frequency of workpieces, according to raw material nodule shape.

were simple, rather thick flakes. The remaining tools are straight simple side-scrapers (RMU: 2, 22), both made on flakes with a partial cortex covering. A high frequency of imported, "ready to use", surface shaped tools has also been noted at many other Middle Palaeolithic sites, and is most likely linked to the multi-functionality and longer "life-span" of these pieces (Boëda 1995).

The transformation section **Cw** is represented by two RMU (Fig 15-8, *1*). One of these is a relatively exhausted core (RMU 12). The form and outline of the piece, as well as the large negatives in the centre of the flaking surface (the result of surface shaping), show that a broken or exhausted bifacial tool was recycled as a core. This pattern of "secondary blank production" is well known from other Crimean Middle Paleolithic sites, especially at Buran Kaya (Uthmeier 2004). The second piece belonging to transformation section **Cw** is a preform (RMU 20) in an initial state. Both artefacts were imported to the site and discarded without any further modification. The purpose of their import is far from clear, especially in the case of the core, it being both exhausted, and with blank production not occurring on-site.

Only one RMU is linked to the transformation section **Ei** (RMU 17) (Fig. 15-8, *1*). In this case, a scraper, which was imported to the site, lost its tip during usage. However, instead of being abandoned was again exported from the site.

Another tool tip was sorted together with a chunk (RMU 18) and classified as belonging to transformation section **TT** (Fig. 15-8, *1*): an imported simple tool, the class of which could not be reconstructed, was used and smashed on the site and discarded.

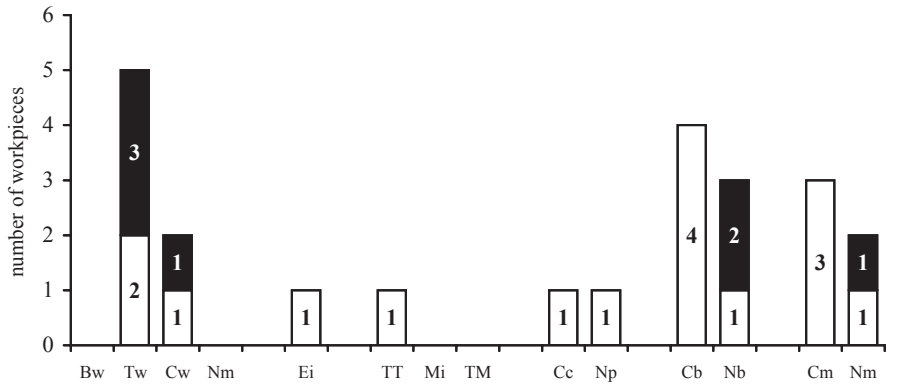

Fig. 15-7 Kabazi II, level III/2: frequency of transformation sections: Bw = blank without transformation (within the excavated area), Tw = tool without transformation, Cw = core without transformation, Nw = nodule without transformation, Ei = isolated functional part of a tool, including resharpening flake, TT = broken tool with corresponding tip, Mi = two or more isolated chips from modification, TM = tool with corresponding chips from its modification, Cc = correction of a core, Np = preparation of a raw nodule, Cb = blank production from a core, Nb = blank production from a raw nodule, Cm = blank production from a core and modification of blank(s), Nm = blank production from a raw nodule and modification of blank(s); in black: workpieces with flakes from *façonnage* and/or surface shaped tools.

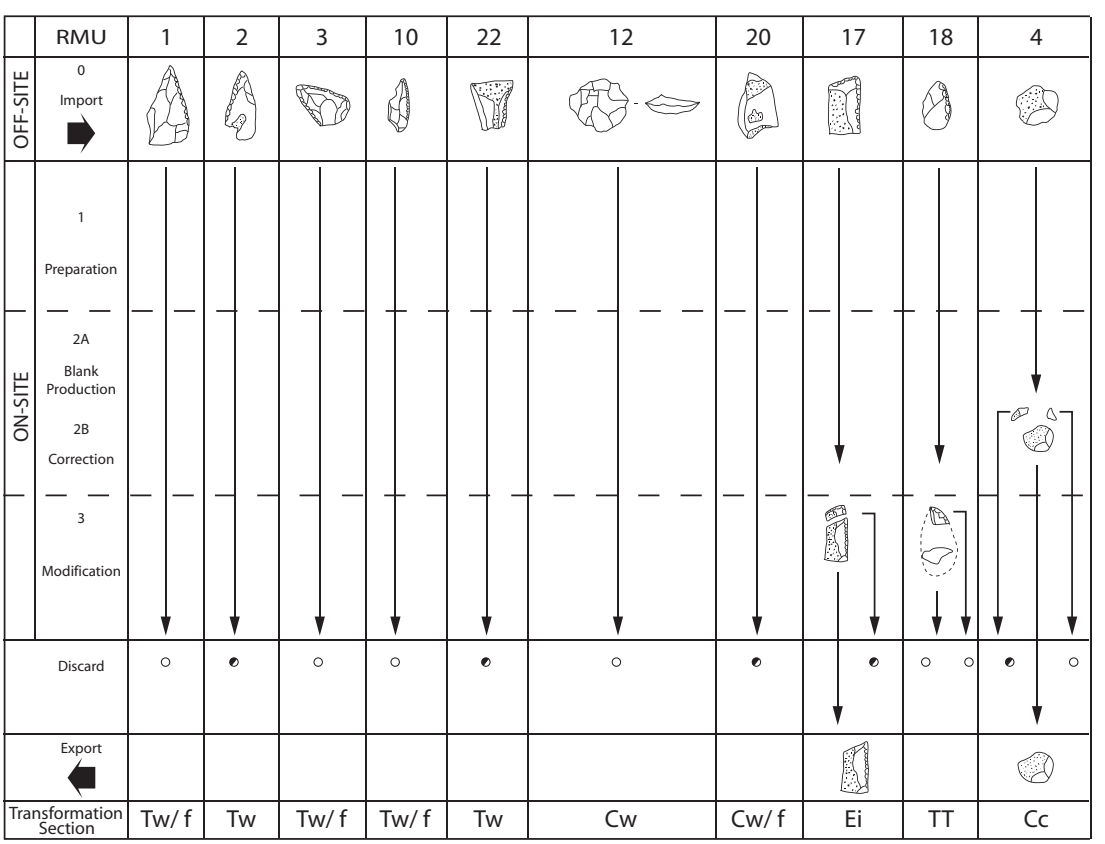

Fig. 15-8, *1* Kabazi II, level III/2: transformation analysis. For each raw material unit, hypotheses are made with regard to the phases of the formal *chaîne opératoire* (after Geneste 1985; 1988; 1990) conducted within the excavated area (transformation section); classification of transformation sections are based upon the presence and absence of indicative blank classes (abbreviations see Fig. 12-6); */f = *façonnage* is indicated by flakes from *façonnage* and/or surface shaped tools.

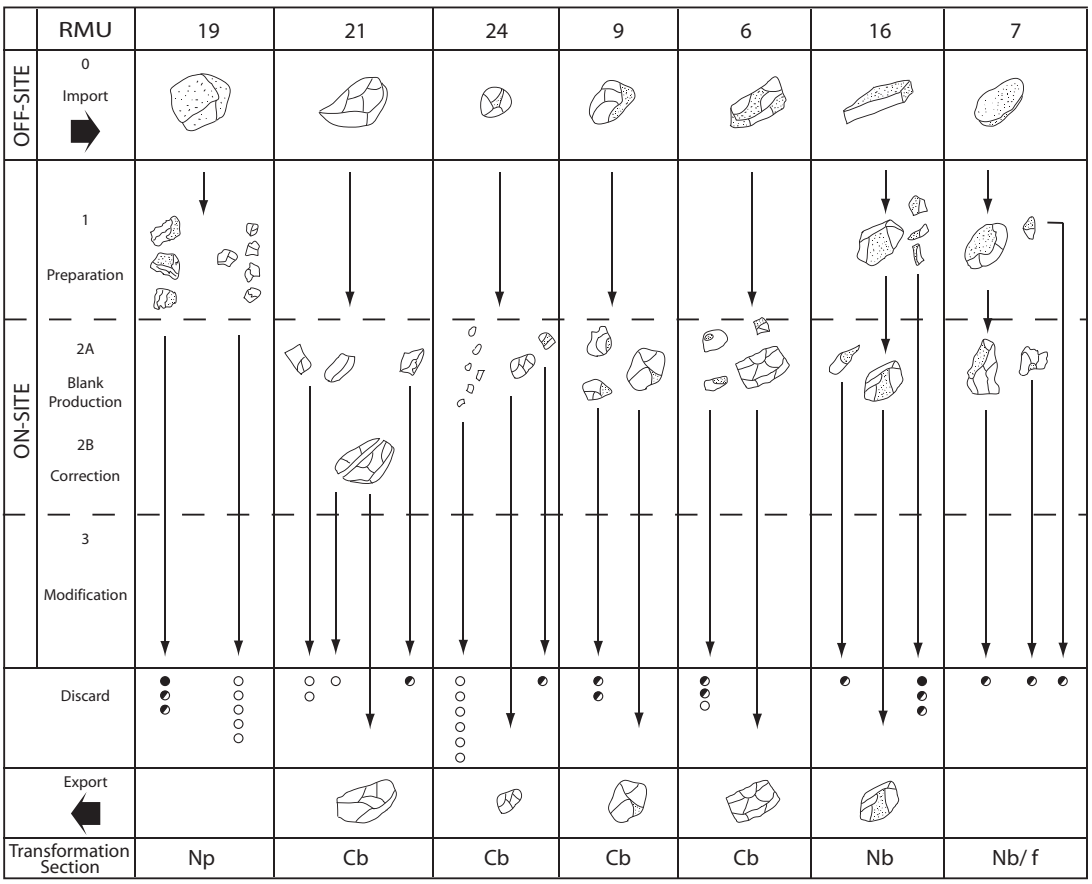

Fig. 15-8, *2*

Workpieces of the category "C" – transformation sections Cc, Cb and Cm

In eight cases a core was imported and modified on the site (Fig 15-8, *1*, 15-8, *2*). All cores were imported in a partial cortical condition, with the exception of that from RMU 21. The core of RMU 4 was merely corrected whilst on site; a blank production did not take place. From the other cores only a small number of blanks were flaked, between 2 (RMU 9) and up to 6 (RMU 13) blanks. As a rule, all cores were exported after flaking, and without any further correction, i.e. corresponding to stage 2B after the scheme proposed by J.-M. Geneste (1985). Cores are present in neither of the workpieces belonging to the transformation sections Cc, Cb or Cm. As previously mentioned, it is uncertain whether all flakes were struck from "real" cores, or whether some were merely the by-products resulting from the initial production of preforms for surface shaped tools. Due to the absence of regular cores and longer knapping sequences, the latter hypotheses appears more plausible in the majority of cases. Only three blanks, which were produced on the site from imported cores/preforms, show modification of their edges. In all cases (RMU: 5, 13) these pieces were modified to different types of scrapers: in RMU 5 a simple side-scraper and in RMU 13 two double side-scrapers were produced.

Workpieces of the category "N" – transformation sections Np, Nb and Nm

Five workpieces were classified as belonging to transformation sections involving the import of a nodule to the site (Fig. 15-8, *2*, 15-8, *3*). The shape of the imported nodules could be reconstructed as follows: 2 flat shaped nodules (RMU: 7, 11), 2 *plaquettes* (RMU: 14, 16), and one round shaped nodule (RMU 19). The latter included so many fissures that a regular formatting on the site was impossible, and the piece broke into several chunks. Three nodules served the production of preforms (RMU 14, 11, 7), with modification occurring in one case only (RMU 14):

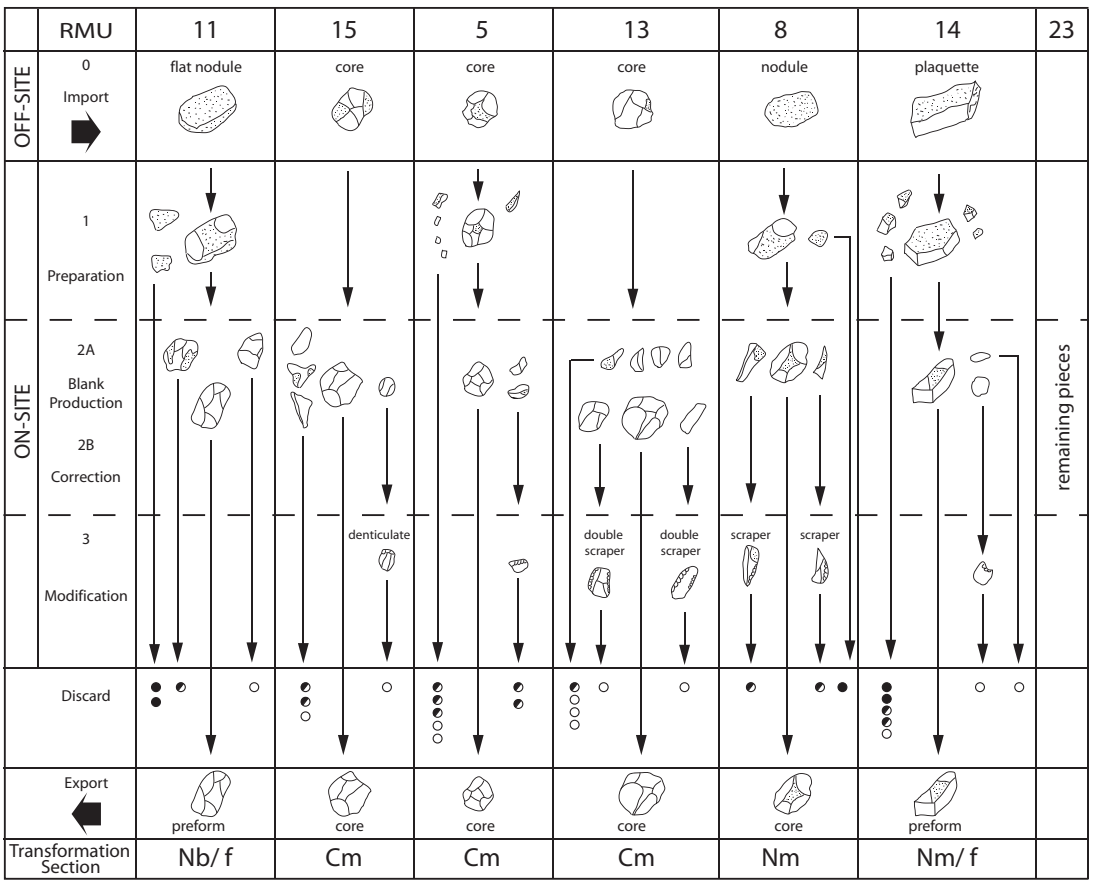

Fig. 15-8, *3*

a blank, resulting from surface shaping, was modified into a notched tool. All on site produced preforms were exported prior to transformation into uni- or bifacial surface shaped tools. Two nodules were formatted into cores. As observed in the workpieces belonging to the "C"-category, these cores were exported after the knapping of only a small number of flakes.

Conclusions

The relatively high percentage of single pieces (35 %), the relatively low quantity of produced blanks, and the "migration" of most of the cores/ preforms, point to several ephemeral occupations, during which only small sections of the *chaîne opératoire* occurred. Only three tools were modified on-site. This indicates that the focus of blank production was the manufacture of pieces with sharp edges for cutting purposes, rather than for the sole purpose of tool production. The main part of the tool-kit was already imported to the site. The absence of rejunevation flakes in the assemblage is also characteristic of the ephemeral character of the occupations, which served butchering activities during which meat bearing parts of the hunted *Equus hydruntinus* were cut off and taken from the site (Pathou-Mathis, Chabai 2005). Embedded into these activities was the production of preforms. These preforms were exported from the site to another activity point where they were used as blanks for the further production of bifaces.

According to V.P. Chabai, level III/2 represents the killing-butchering station of Type B (Chabai 2004c, Chapter 18, this volume).

Abstract

КАБАЗИ II, ГОРИЗОНТ III/2: ПАЛИМПСЕСТ ПОСЕЛЕНИЙ ПО РАЗДЕЛКЕ ЛОШАДЕЙ

М. КУРБЮН

Отложения, содержащие находки горизонта III/2, аккумулировались во время климатических условий южно-бореальной лесостепи стадии MIS 5a (Gerasimenko 1999, 2005). На основании анализа фаунистических остатков был сделан вывод о том, что данный горизонт представлен палимпсестом ряда кратковременных стоянок специализировавшихся на разделке гидрунтиновых лошадей. После разделки наиболее питательные части туш транспортировались за пределы стоянок (Patou-Mathis, Chabai 2005).

Кремневый комплекс горизонта III/2 представлен 74 артефактами, которые были подразделены на 23 сырьевые группы. Основными чертами комплекса находок горизонта III/2 являются: высокое содержание (35 %) сырьевых групп представленных одним артефактом; незначительное количество заготовок произведенных на территории стоянки; импорт / экспорт нуклеусов и преформ. Данная характеристика соответствует модели использования сырья нескольких кратковременных стоянок, на которых была представлена только часть технологической цепи обработки кремня. Незначительное по объему производство сколов было в большей степени сфокусировано на получении отщепов с острой режущей кромкой, чем на получении заготовок для изготовления орудий.