

Kazakstan	Koshkurgan 1-2 Shoktas 1 (500-430,000 years)	
Israel	Revadim Quarry Bizat Ruhama	

Table I: Some sites with microlithic assemblages in Europe and the Near East

– *raw material?*

The lack of large stone blocks around the sites could explain the exploitation of small pebbles. However, geological studies provide evidence that diversified pebbles were certainly available in the surroundings in most cases (for example Kůlna),¹⁵ except maybe for the Pontinian sites (small flint pebbles available in the surroundings). In Bizat Ruhama, small flakes also would be related to the superior quality of small flint pebbles compared to large pebbles.¹⁶ On the other hand, any debitage system can control the flake size, and can produce not only small flakes.

– *specific locations, specific activities?*

The sites raise questions about specific activities near water springs, as favourable areas to animal and vegetal life. Humans would have come to hunt or scavenge dead or injured animals. These animals in most cases are large mammals. Therefore, the human activities would have been programmed. The frequency of elephants or rhinoceros would have a particular meaning, and is not a matter of coincidence. Humans could require a specific tool kit to work on the animal corpses, even the small artefacts of these sites do not seem to show clear functional characteristics. Other kinds of assemblages show the same kinds of artefacts.

The question of an association with a specific location, linked to a specific way of life, requiring a specific technology, has been first asked, even if a better preservation of the archaeological remains inside travertine deposits undoubtedly sheds a distorted light on this type of settlement.

– *specific environnement?*

Associated with various faunal remains, these assemblages indicate that different environments could have been exploited through this kind of artefacts. A specific environment cannot be consequently the single explanation. However, these locations are fre-

¹⁵ MONCEL-NERUDA 2000.; OLIVA 2000.

¹⁶ RONEN et al. 1998.