

# Anthropological Report of the Ramla (Bialik Interchange) Excavation

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As explained in the above report, the excavation area was divided into two rows of squares, Row A (Graves 1-9) to the southeast and Row B (Graves 10-18) to the northwest. All graves contained only one individual, thus totaling 18 skeletons in number.

The finds included human bones in a moderate-to-poor state of preservation; the individuals were buried in pits in the ground without any lining or built structure.

The following is a description of the graves' human remains.

## *Grave 1*

This grave contained human bones only. The bones were found without anatomic articulation. Yet it appears that this grave was a primary burial which had been disturbed. Skeletal remains included postcranial bones (of the body without the skull), of which only



Figure 1. Grave 1 (facing south).

the leg bones were identified (Fig. 1). From the bones' length and thickness it was possible to conclude that the individual was an adult, i.e. older than 15 years of age. The individual's sex was not clear.

## *Grave 2*

This grave included human bones found in primary burial and in articulation. They included only postcranial bones, from the upper and lower parts of the



Figure 2. Grave 2. Vertebrae visible in the upper center.



Figure 3. Grave 3. Remains of skull and teeth on the right side.



Figure 4. Grave 4.

body (Fig. 2). The body was oriented northeast/southwest, the head to the southwest. From the length and thickness of the bones it can be assumed that this individual was an adult, i.e. older than 15 years of age. The gender could not be determined.

### *Grave 3*

This grave included a skull broken into small pieces and a very small number of postcranial adult bones. The remains were found in anatomic articulation, which indicates that this was a primary burial (Fig. 3). The body was oriented northeast/southwest, with the head to the southwest. Because of the skull's poor preservation the individual's sex could not be determined. However, from the degree of tooth wear and decay the age could be estimated at 30-40 years.

Conclusion: the bones from this grave represent an individual of undetermined gender who died at the age of about 30-40.

### *Grave 4*

This skeleton measured 1.8m from head to feet. Around these human remains the outline of the over-cut grave was visible due to soil color differences.

The bones found were in anatomic articulation, indicating a primary burial. Remains included the skull and postcranial bones (Fig. 4). The body was laid on its right side, oriented northeast/southwest with the head to the southwest facing east. From the thickness and size of the bones we can determine that they were those of an adult, i.e. over 15 years old (Bass 1987). The individual's sex was not determinable.

### *Grave 5*

The human bones in this grave included a very small number of non-indicative long bone fragments. Despite the bones' bad preservation, from the size of the fragments it was deduced that they belonged to an adult (i.e. over 15 years old) (Bass 1987). The individual's sex could not be determined.

### *Grave 6*

In this grave only the skull of a child was found; the remaining bones were not preserved. The skull was found at the grave's the southwest end, facing east





Figure 5. Grave 6.



Figure 7. Grave 8.



Figure 6. Grave 7.

(judging from the location of the teeth, Fig. 5). From the degree of tooth development<sup>1</sup> the child's age can be determined as about 8 years.

#### *Grave 7*

The bones included a very small number of long bone fragments, among which leg bones were identified (Fig. 6). Despite the bad preservation of the remains, from the size of the fragments this skeleton can be determined as that of an adult, i.e. over 15 years (Bass 1987). The individual's sex was undeterminable.

#### *Grave 8*

These bones included a very small number of non-indicative, fragmented long bones (Fig. 7). Despite their poor preservation, from the bone fragments' size it was determined that they belonged to an adult, i.e. over 15 years (Bass 1987). The gender was not determinable.

#### *Grave 9*

These remains included a very small number of long bone fragments. Leg bones were identified (Fig. 8). Despite the bones' bad preservation it was determined from their size that they belonged to an adult, i.e. over 15 years old (Bass 1987). The individual's sex was not determinable.

<sup>1</sup> This is based on the second bottom molar tooth, specifically the degree of the crown and root's development (Ubelaker 1989).



Figure 8. Grave 9.

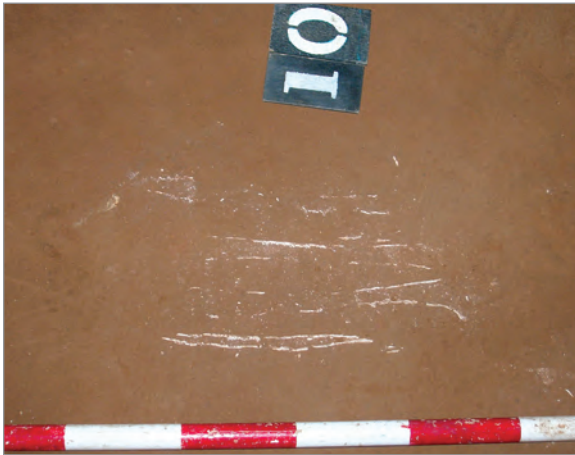


Figure 9. Grave 10 (facing east).



Figure 10. Grave 11. Teeth visible at the top.

**Grave 10**

The bones here were found in primary burial and anatomic articulation. The leg bones were most likely laid in a flexed position (Fig. 9). The skeleton was oriented northeast/southwest, with the head probably to the southwest. From the thickness and size of the bones the individual can be determined as an adult, i.e. over 15 years (Bass 1987). The individual's gender was not determinable.

**Grave 11**

In this grave a child's skull was found; the rest of the body's bones were not preserved. The skull was found at the grave's southwest ends. From the location of the teeth we deduced that the skull was facing east (Fig. 10). From the degree of the tooth development the child's age can be estimated to be about seven years (Ubelaker 1989).<sup>2</sup>

**Grave 12**

The finds from this grave consisted mainly of an adult individual's skull; the postcranial bones were preserved only in traces. The body was oriented northeast/southwest. The skull was found at the southwest side, the teeth revealing that it faced east (Fig. 11 [left]). Morphologically the skull's bones suggest the individual was a male (Bass 1987). The estimated age of this individual—as indicated by the degree of tooth wear (Fig. 11 [right])—is 30-40 years (Hillson 1993).

Conclusion: the bones from this locus represent an individual male age 30-40 years.

**Grave 13**

The finds from this grave comprised an adult individual's skull; the postcranial bones were not preserved. The skull was found at the southeast side (Fig. 12). Since no indicative anatomical elements were found (such as teeth or large parts of the skull), it was not possible to determine the sex or age of the individual. Even so, due to the thickness of the skull's bones and

<sup>2</sup> This is based on an analysis of the second bottom primary molar tooth's crown development.