'Atiqot 52, 2006

The Flint Tools from Tel Mikhal (Tel Michal)

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Eleven flint tools were uncovered in the excavation of Tel Mikhal (Table 1). More than half (61%) are complete. The early stratigraphic sequence at Tel Mikhal dates from the Early Bronze Age (Gophna 1974) through the Middle Bronze Age. Yet, the main occupation at the site is later, and dates from the end of the Iron Age through the Persian period. The flint tools in particular existed over an even longer time span, possibly from as early as the Neolithic period.

In the tool category there were five scrapers, three Canaanean sickle blades, two MB sickle blades, and one with bilateral notches. One of the items was originally a ridge blade, but had been broken distally. This tool was probably reused after bilateral notches located near the base were carved in it. The tool with two pronounced notches resembles the Naḥal Ḥemar knifes that originated in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B period (Bar-Yosef and Alon 1988:9).

The Early Bronze Age is represented at Tel Mikhal by three Canaanean sickle blades and retouched blades, products of the Canaanean industry (Rosen 1997). The two sickle blades are unfortunately merely fragments, lacking distal and proximal edges. They have either one or two working edges, retouched by fine denticulation and showing gloss (Fig. 1:1, 2, 5, 6). They were made of fine-grained raw material, of Eocene origin, and are brown to light gray and beige color. The retouched blade is similar, although no gloss remains.

Table 1. Flint Tools

Basket	Locus	Flakes	Blades	Tools	Remarks
1301	197	1	–	–	–
1389	150	1	–	–	–
1510	259	–	1	–	–
1191	165	–	–	1	Cannaanean sickle blade
1249	187	–	–	1	Cannaanean sickle blade
1329	208	–	–	1	Cannaanean sickle blade
1094	141	–	–	1	Ridge blade with bilateral notches
1238	188	–	–	1	MB sickle blade
1299	197	–	–	1	MB sickle blade
1291	199	–	–	1	Scraper
1351	214	–	–	1	Scraper
1387	232	–	–	1	Scraper
1083	141	1	1	2	Scrapers
Total		*3*	*2*	*11*	
1023	110			1	Hammerstone
1199	170			1	Hammerstone

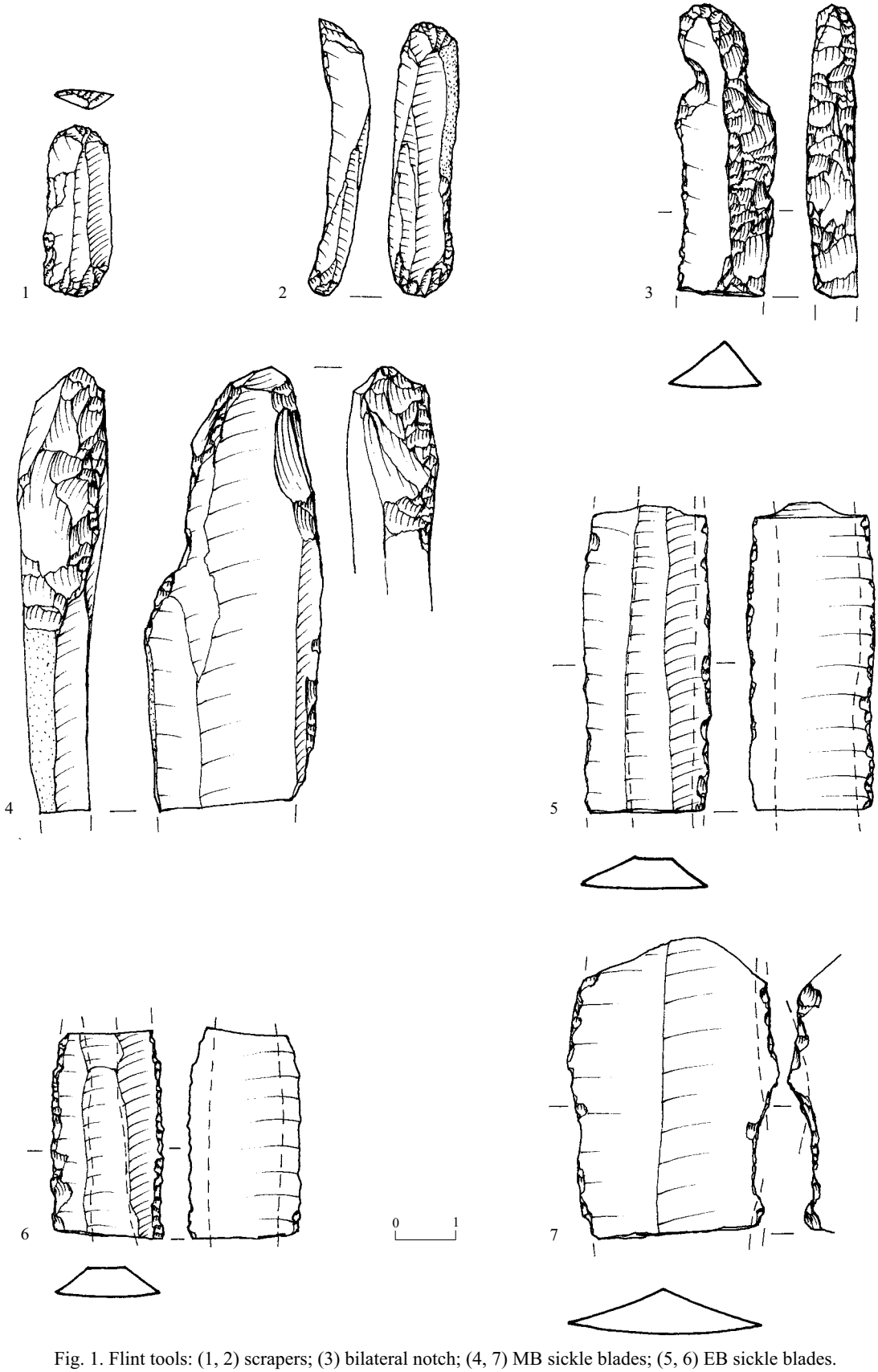

Fig. 1. Flint tools: (1, 2) scrapers; (3) bilateral notch; (4, 7) MB sickle blades; (5, 6) EB sickle blades.

Two sickles (Fig. 1:4, 7) are characteristic of early Middle Bronze Age flint assemblages (Rosen 1983; 1997:111). These have wide-shaped blades with semi-abrupt retouch fashioning on one side. The working edges were finely denticulated (Fig. 1:7). Both have heavy gloss on both sides.

The ad hoc tools are represented by five scrapers (Fig. 1:1, 2). Three of these were fashioned from blades and the other two from flakes. Such scrapers can be found in the early Neolithic.

Few solid conclusions can be drawn from these artifacts. However, identical tools found at the tell can indicate the presence of an earlier occupation, perhaps as early as the PPNB.

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