

REMAINS FROM THE LATE PREHISTORIC TO EARLY ISLAMIC PERIODS AT THE FOOT OF TEL MALOT (EAST)*

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INTRODUCTION

The following report presents the results of two independent salvage excavations conducted in low-lying areas surrounding the mound known as Tel Malot (Fig. 1). Work in Field I (c. 50 m from the eastern edge of the mound; map. ref. NIG 187495/640471, OIG 137495/140471), directed by G. Parnos,¹ was conducted prior to the widening of a railway alongside the eastern side of the tell.² Field II (map ref. NIG 187768/640394, OIG 137768/140394), located approximately 300 m south-southeast of Field I, was directed by I. Milevski prior to the construction of the Cross-Israel Highway.³

Field Designation and Methods

An extensive survey was undertaken prior to the excavation with the aid of mechanical equipment. In Field I, trenches were excavated to determine the presence and depth of ancient layers. In Field II, the upper layer of soil was completely removed prior to the archaeological investigations.

* This article is dedicated to the memory of Giora Parnos. Giora passed away while working at the excavations of Mishmar David on October 23, 2006. As a colleague and friend, Giora's most outstanding feature was his readiness to help and share his knowledge. He was a gifted and talented field archaeologist and a true pioneer in developing computer-generated programs to advance archeological work and research. We also want to dedicate this article to Giora's wife Michal, who has since passed away, and to his two daughters, Daria and Anna, whom they loved dearly.

As the fields were excavated independent of one another, the numbering system was not continuous; the areas of excavation in each field were labeled with capital letters preceded by Roman numerals marking the field (e.g., Areas I/A, I/B, II/A, II/B). Features designate architectural or structural units, or complexes, identified prior to, or during, the excavations. The areas were excavated within a grid of 5 × 5 m squares, with a one-meter balk between them. The floors and contents of pits were dry-sieved through a 5 mm mesh.

The Field I features are described according to periods, from early to late, whereas in Field II they are presented according to area. The summary and discussion of both fields is presented together according to periods. The areas and features of both Fields I and II are listed in Table 1, including the dating proposed by the excavators.

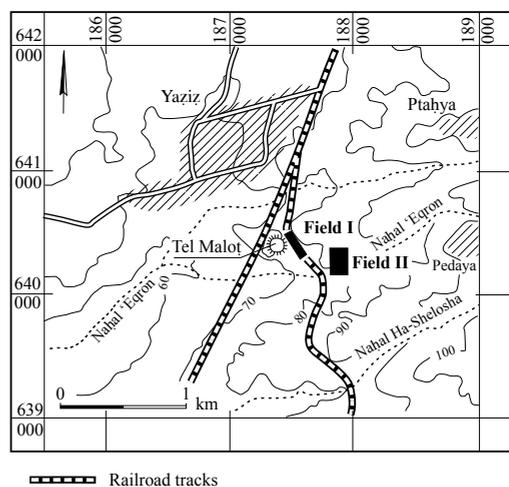


Fig. 1. Location map of Fields I and II.

Table 1. Correspondence of Fields, Areas, Features and Periods

Field	Area	Feature		Period	
		No.	Definition		
I	I/A	1	Building remains	Byzantine	
		2	Winepress	Byzantine	
		3	Building remains	Byzantine	
		10	Occupation layer	PN	
		11	Supporting wall	Byzantine	
		I/B	4	Well	LB I
			5	Kiln	MB II
			6	Rectangular structure	Abassid
			7	Pit	PN
			8	Pit	PN
			9	Cist grave	Iron Age?
			12	Round structure	PN
			13	Cist grave	Iron Age
II	II/A	14	Pit	Chalcolithic	
		15	Winepress	Hellenistic	
	II/B	16	Pit	?	
		17	Pit	PN	
		18	Pit	Chalcolithic	
		19	Pit	Chalcolithic	
		20	Pit	Chalcolithic	
		21	Pit	?	
		II/C	22	Pit	?
		II/D	23	Pit	Chalcolithic

FIELD I

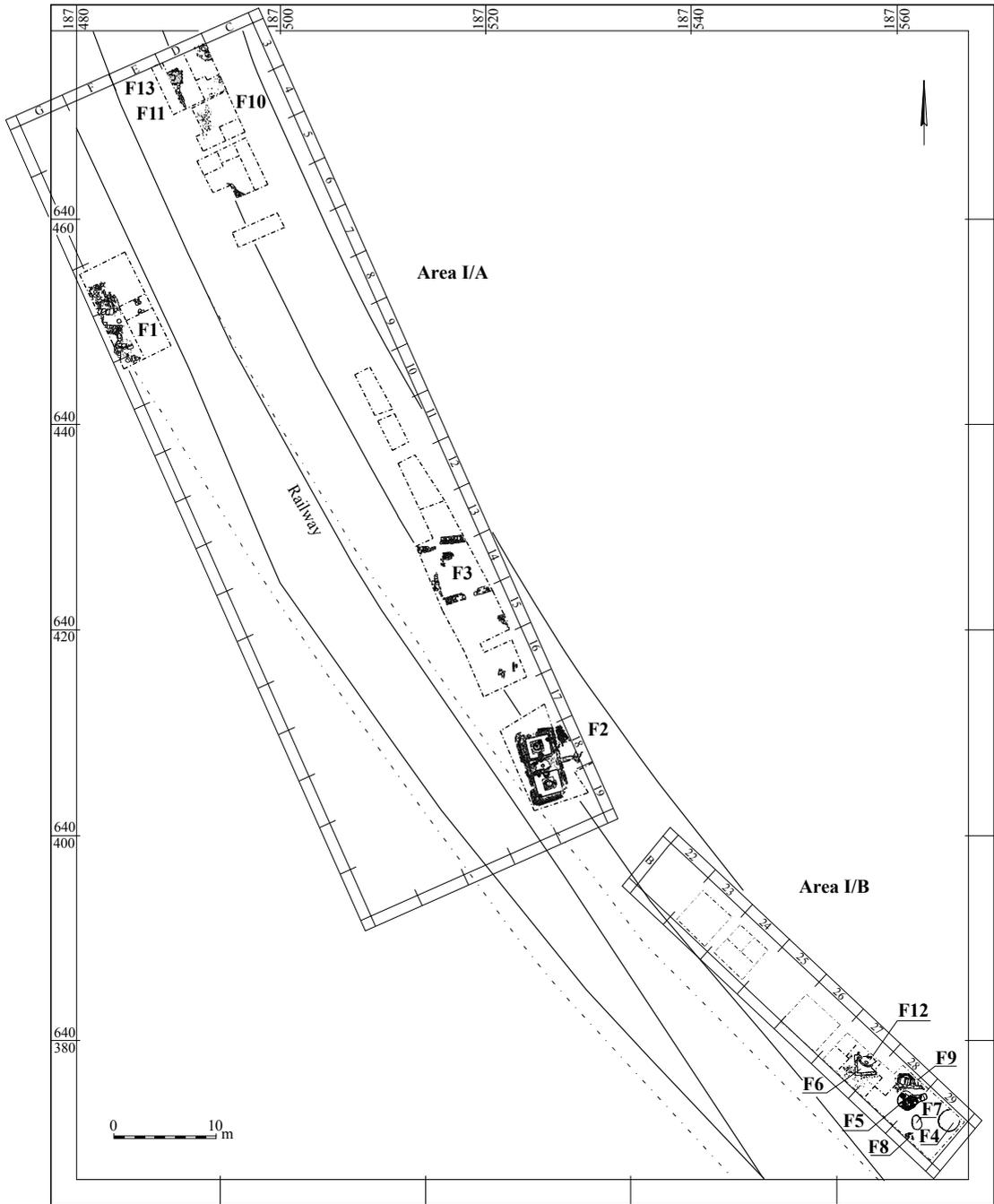
This field is located between the eastern slopes of Tel Maloṭ and the northern bank of Naḥal ‘Eqron (Fig. 1; Plan 1), a seasonal watercourse, at a geological junction between the chalk layer of the Middle Shephelah formation and the *ḥamra* layer predominating in the coastal plain (Orni and Efrat 1971:45–46). The area is characterized by the presence of a high-ground water table that in places percolates to the surface, creating small springs.

Two excavated areas, I/A and I/B, approximately 20 m apart, were opened adjacent to the railway.⁴ Remains of the Pottery Neolithic (PN), Middle Bronze Age II and Late Bronze Age, as well as of the Byzantine and Early Islamic periods, were uncovered.

Area I/A is located in the northern part of Field I, along the railway line (Plan 1). A single row of squares (85 m long, 5 m wide) was opened on the western edge of a hill that rises to the east of the railway, and two additional squares were opened to its west. Three layers of soil were encountered in different parts of the excavation area, overlaying the chalky bedrock. These include, from bottom to top:

1. Sterile, yellowish sandy soil.
2. Laminae of soils of different hues, bearing archaeological deposits.
3. A layer of dark agricultural topsoil.

Architectural remains were only encountered in the northernmost and southernmost squares (D3–D5 and C14–C19 respectively). In the northern part of the area, the aforementioned laminae were part of an accumulation of some



Plan 1. Field I, division of areas and location of features.



Fig. 2. Field I, Area I/B, looking north.

2 m of deposits. These laminae were subdivided into three distinct layers: with the lowest, a reddish brown soil, followed by a light brown matrix mixed with sand, and finally covered with a dark red-brown layer.

Area I/B is located in the southernmost part of the field, c. 20 m from the northern bank of Naḥal ‘Eqron (Plan 1). It consists of a row of contiguous squares (B22–29) oriented northwest–southeast. The archaeological remains were concentrated in the southeastern part of the area (Fig. 2).

The deposits in this area were, from bottom to top: an archaeologically sterile layer (c. 2 m thick) of *husmas* lying above chalky bedrock; an earthen fill, containing archaeological material, covering the *husmas*; overlaid in turn by dark brown topsoil. The deposits in the southernmost part of the area (L402; Sq B29) were waterlogged, the result of percolation to the surface from the shallow water table. A modern trench, up to 4 m wide, was cut into the uppermost archaeological deposits along the row of squares prior to excavation. Where the *husmas* layer was excavated over bedrock,

additional evidence of the high water table was encountered.

THE POTTERY NEOLITHIC PERIOD

The earliest evidence of occupation at the site is attributed to the PN period, of which several features were exposed and excavated in Field I.

Area I/A, Feature 10

This feature was exposed in the northern extreme of Area I/A (Sq D3–5; Plan 2). The lowest archaeological deposits were a layer of sandy soil, containing small stones interspersed with sherds, flint items and animal bones (see Kehati, this volume), above sterile soil. The archaeological deposits were covered with a surface of light brown, hard-packed soil (L144, L161 and L162), which sloped down slightly to the south (0.1 m thick in the north and 0.3 m thick in the south). This surface was covered with yet another layer of soil, also containing sherds and flints (L150 and L157). All the

artifacts recovered from this feature date to the PN period.

In its southwestern part (L161), apparently due to geomorphological reasons, stones were arranged in two parallel lines (Fig. 3). A concentration of sherds was unearthed in the western part of Sq D4 (L162; Fig. 4), where a soil layer was disturbed by pits (L160, L166), apparently dug in the Byzantine period.

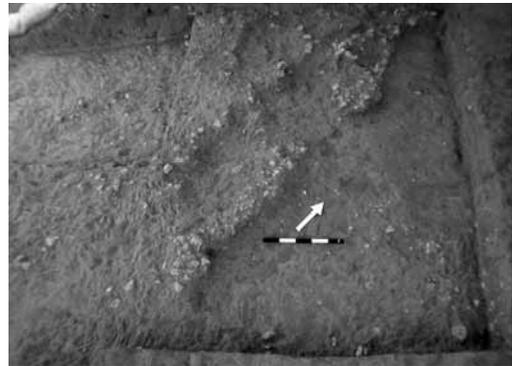
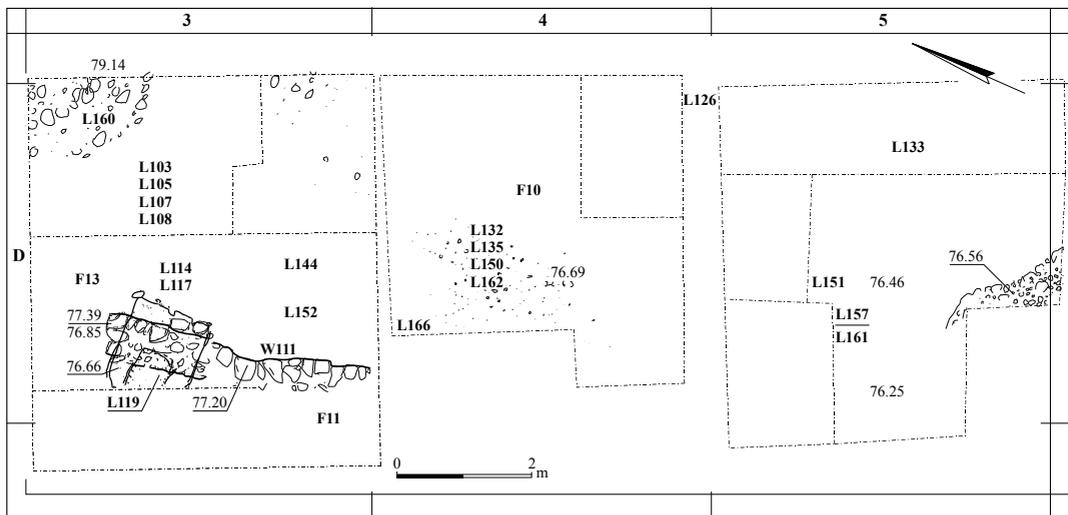


Fig. 3. Field I, Feature 10. Scattered stones in L161, looking northeast.



Plan 2. Field I, Area I/A north.

North of Feature 10, a cist grave (Feature 13; Fig. 5), probably dating from Iron I, contained potsherds from the PN period (L117; see below).

Area I/B, Feature 12: Round Structure

A curvilinear wall (W429), exposed beneath Feature 6 (Sq B27; Plan 3; see Fig. 25, below), was built of one row of medium-

sized fieldstones; it may have been part of a circular structure measuring approximately 2 m in diameter. Within this structure, a surface of ashy beaten soil was exposed (L430). Finds included a flat stone (c. $0.30 \times 0.25 \times 0.05$ m) resting directly on the layer, as well as non-diagnostic sherds, probably dated to the PN period, which could suggest its time of use.

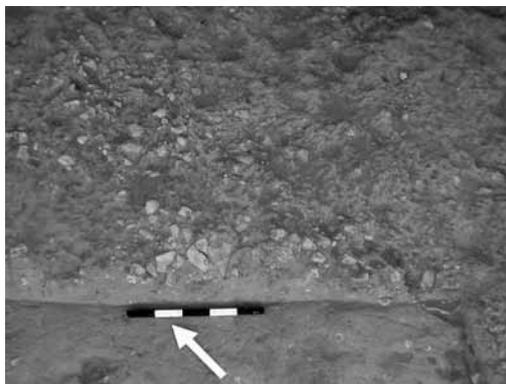


Fig. 4. Field I, Feature 10. Scattered stones and pottery in L162, looking east.

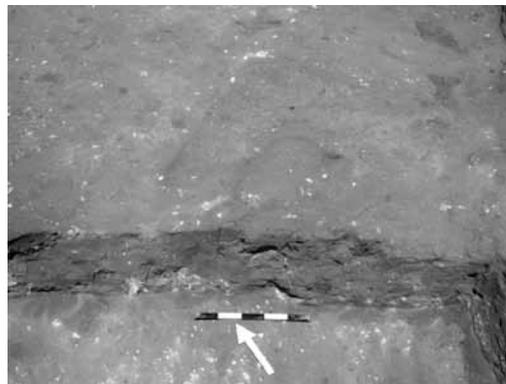
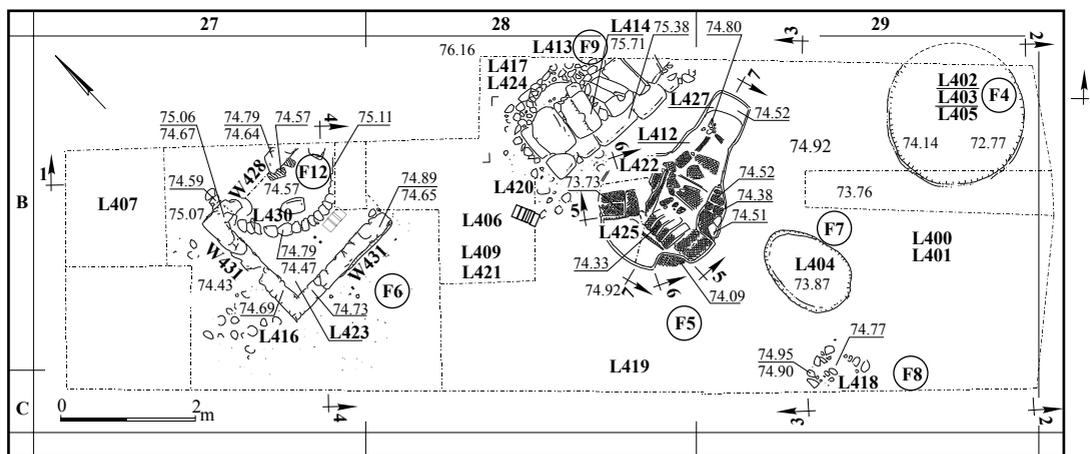
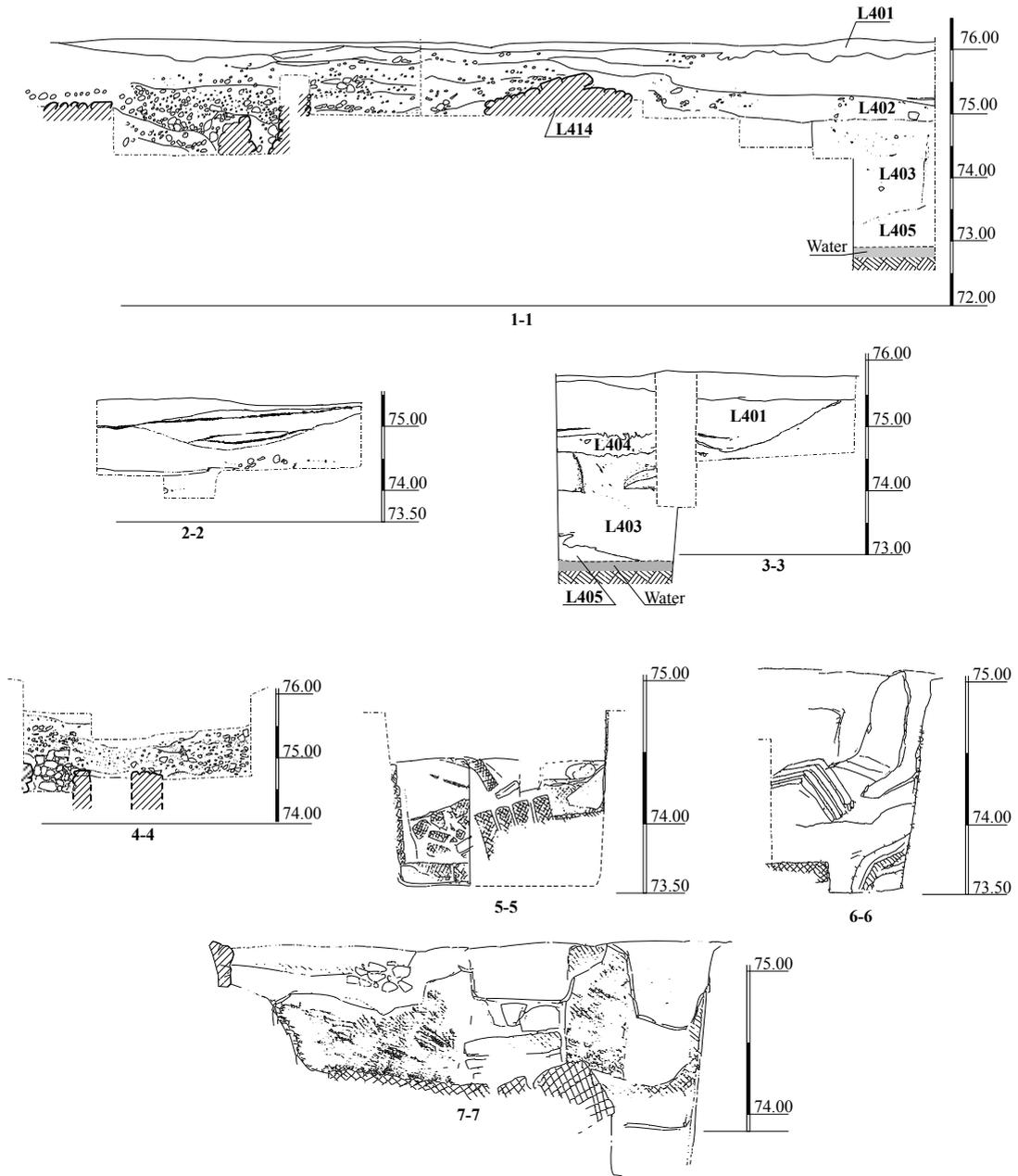


Fig. 5. Field I, Feature 13. A cist grave, containing PN potsherds, looking northeast.



Plan 3. Field I, Area I/B: plan and sections (on opposite page).



Plan 3. (cont.).

Area I/B, Features 7, 8: Pits

Two pits were cut into the *husmas* layer (Sq B29; L404, L418; Plan 3) in the southwestern part of Area I/B. Feature 7 (Figs. 6, 7) was elliptical in shape, measuring c. 0.5 × 1.4 m, c. 1 m deep. The upper fill was characterized by

a thick layer (c. 0.2 m) of ashy, dark brown soil, with small stones, pebbles and some flint items, including an arrowhead (see Fig. 35:2) and animal bones (see Kehati, this volume). The lower part of the pit was filled with soft reddish soil mixed with burnt mudbrick material and flint artifacts (see below).



Fig. 6. Field I, Feature 7. The upper part of a pit, looking north.

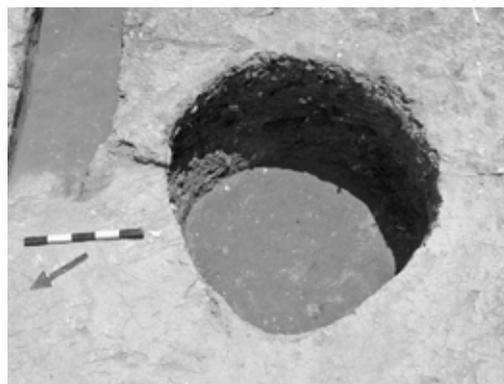


Fig. 7. Field I, Feature 7. A pit, looking south.



Fig. 8. Field I, Feature 8. A pit, looking west.

Feature 8, discovered c. 0.5 to the southwest of Feature 7 (Fig. 8), is a shallow pit (c. 0.2 m deep) excavated only in its eastern half. It was filled with soft, light brown soil, containing small stones. Archaeological finds were not encountered during the course of the excavation. As this pit appears at the same level as Feature 7, and is covered with similar layers, probably related to MB II or later, it is tentatively dated to the PN period.

The Neolithic Pottery

Figure 9 illustrates Neolithic sherds deriving from Feature 10. A small number of fragments, found within the fill that covered Feature 13

(L117; see below), are very similar to those from Feature 10, and are assumed to have derived from the same chrono-cultural horizon. The ceramic assemblage as a whole was handmade and contained considerable quantities of straw temper. Some sherds are reddish yellow in color with light gray cores, while others are of very pale brown fabrics with calcite grits and dark gray cores. The only forms that could be distinguished among the fragments were rims and bases of bowls, and handles.

The closest parallels come from Jericho IX (Garstang, Crowfoot and Droop 1935), which is equivalent to Kenyon's PNA (Kenyon and Holland 1982). The latter suggested a date in the sixth millennium BCE.

Bowls (Fig. 9:1–8).— Numbers 1–3 are bases. Bowl Nos. 2, 4–6 are red-burnished. Numbers 4–7 are deep bowls of Type C1 or C2 according to the typology suggested by Garfinkel (1999:78–79). Number 8 is a base showing marks of the mat on which it was fashioned.

Handles (Fig. 9:9–12).— Number 9 is a knob, while Nos. 10–12 are lug handles, probably of pots or jars of Types D2 and E1 according to Garfinkel's typology (Garfinkel 1999:78, 88–89, Figs. 50:4–7; 55–56).

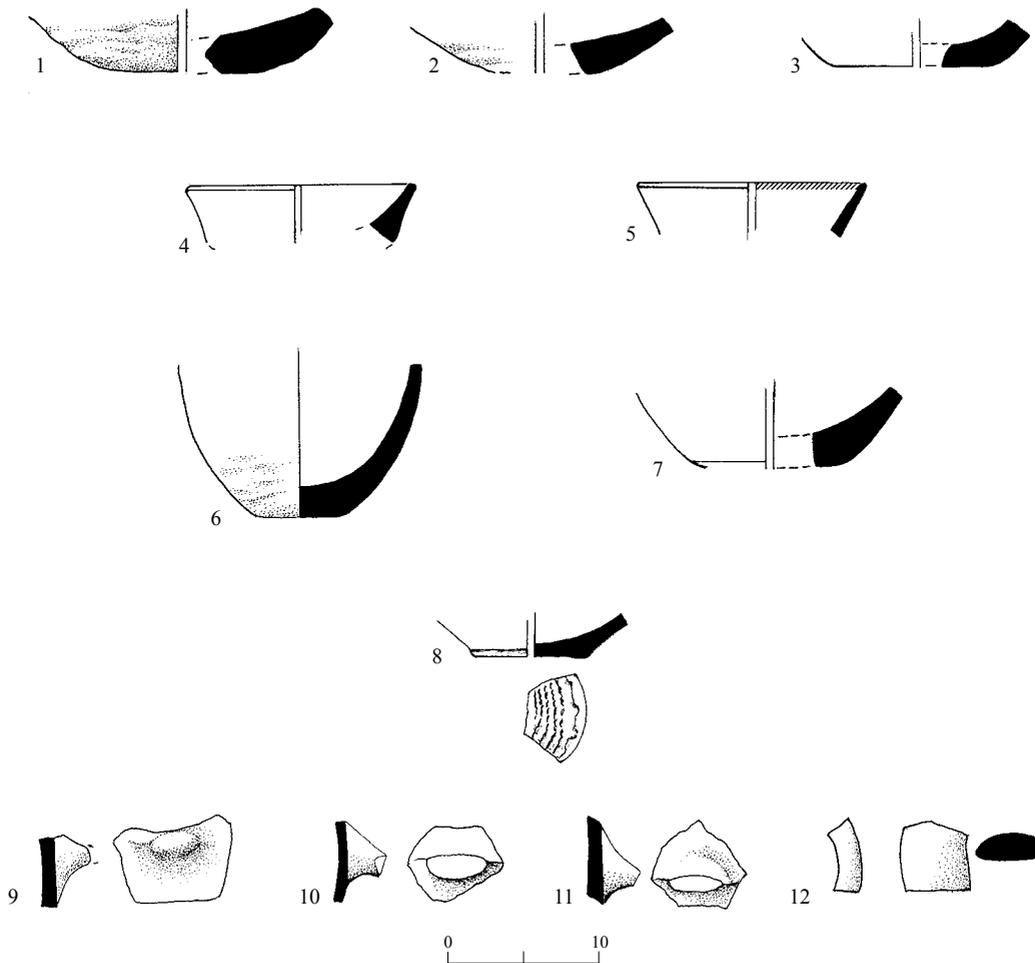


Fig. 9. Field I. Neolithic Pottery from Feature 10.

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Description
1	Bowl	144/1141/1	Very pale brown clay, coarse gray grits
2	Bowl	162/1181/2	Very pale brown clay, red coat, gray core, white grits
3	Bowl	144/1119/2	Very pale brown clay, gray core, medium white grits
4	Bowl	161/1176/2	Pink clay, red coat, light gray core
5	Bowl	144/1107/2	Pink clay, red coat, light gray core, small gray grits
6	Bowl	162/1194/1	Reddish yellow clay, red coat, light gray core
7	Bowl	150/1132/1	Very pale brown clay, gray core, small and medium white grits
8	Bowl	132/1066/1	Very pale brown clay, dark gray core, small and medium white, red and gray grits
9	Handle	133/1121/1	Very pale brown clay, medium gray grits
10	Handle	133/1121/3	Very pale brown clay, medium white and gray grits
11	Handle	151/1131/1	Very pale brown clay, dark gray core, small white and orange grits
12	Handle	162/1181/1	Reddish yellow clay, light gray core, small and medium gray and red grits

MIDDLE BRONZE AGE II AND LATE BRONZE AGE I

Area I/B, Feature 5: Kiln

A pottery kiln (Figs. 10, 11; Plan 3) was unearthened in Area I/B, in the eastern part of Sq B28, south of Feature 9 (a cist tomb) and north of Feature 4 (a well). It was discovered c. 1.2 m below the modern surface and was covered by c. 0.3 m of brown fill containing numerous small stones (L412, L422). The kiln has a “key-hole” plan with a narrow corridor (L427; 0.80×1.25 m) leading to the east down a single step to a round central pit (L425; diam. c. 2 m); it was cut to a depth of 1.6 m into the *husmas*



Fig. 10. Field I, Feature 5. Pottery kiln, looking northeast.



Fig. 11. Field I, Feature 5. Pottery kiln, looking northwest.

layer. A thin greenish layer of burnt mud (c. 5 cm thick) was seen on the sides of the pit.

Three rectangular supports (for a no-longer extant platform of a firing chamber; see below) of burnt mudbricks were unearthened; a fourth one remained near the entrance in an unexcavated part of the kiln. These supports were partially built into the circumference wall of the kiln and, with the exception of the southern support (c. 1 m high), were only partly preserved. The support on the south measured 0.38×0.50 m, that on the west 0.2×0.5 m and that on the north c. 0.25×0.50 m. The colors of the mudbricks range from green on their exterior to red and black in their core.

The northern support was found under a collapse of bricks; the remainder were distinguished by their impressions—unburned strips (0.5 m wide)—in the circumference wall. The space between the supports was filled with several debris layers of ashes and brick fragments. Between the western and northern supports, a complete line of mudbricks (each $0.11 \times 0.33 \times 0.33$ m) was found. Ceramics deriving from the debris layer were dated exclusively to MB IIA (see below).

On the basis of the plan, the feature may be reconstructed as a double chamber updraft kiln, similar to others attributed to MB II at ‘Afula (Dothan 1975:34–35), Tell el-Hayat (Falconer and Magness-Gardiner 1984:54), Afeq (Kochavi 1989:52–53), Tel Mikhal (Kletter and Gorzalczy 2001), Tel Aviv-Jaffa (Kletter and Gorzalczy 2001), Tell Qasile (Ayalon 1987; Kletter 2006:93–99), Tel Gerisa (Geva 1982:10–11, Pl. 11), Nahal Soreq (Singer-Avitz and Levy 1992), Kh. Umm-Kalḥa (near Yesodot; Angelina Dagot, pers. comm.), Tell el-Ḥesi (Bliss 1898:44–51), Tel Ridan (Vitto and Edelstein 1993) and Tell el-‘Ajjul (Petrie 1931:6, 11, Pls. VI, LII:1). This kind of kiln was operated by stoking a subterranean combustion chamber (L425) through a tunnel (L427) used for introducing fuel. The firing chamber was located above the firebox, which was separated from the combustion chamber below by a perforated platform (Killebrew

1996:136–137). The platform, not preserved, was mounted on supports attached to the side walls of the combustion chamber.

Pottery from Feature 5

Diagnostic pottery sherds found in Feature 5 are presented in Fig. 12, and appear according

to their findspots. Parallel types found in other sites are given, when possible, with the figures. Due to the high level of preservation, it was possible to distinguish between pottery found in the combustion chamber (Nos. 1–15) and pottery found within the fill that covered the kiln (Nos. 16–24) after it was destroyed

Fig. 12 ▶

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Description	Parallels
1*	Bowl	425/4083/2	Reddish ware, some small black inclusions, red slip on rim, ext. face burnished horizontally	Beck 1985: Fig 5:7
2	Bowl	425/4068/1	Reddish ware, yellowish core, red slip, burnished	Kochavi 2000: Fig. 10.20:6
3*	Bowl	425/4085/2	Yellowish ware, red-painted strip on rim	Kochavi 2000: Fig. 10.12:12 Dever 1986: Pl. 5:21
4*	Krater	425/4078/1	Reddish ware, some black inclusions, gray core	Kochavi 2000: Fig. 10.10:18, 19
5	Bowl	425/4080/1	Brown ware	Kochavi 2000: Fig. 8.12:7 Beck 1985: Fig. 4:2
6	Krater	425/4072/2	Reddish ware	
7	Jar	425/4068/3	Buff ware, viscous	Dever 1986: Pl. 3:5
8	Jar	425/4085/1		Kochavi 2000: Fig. 8.10:2
9	Jar	425/4068/2	Reddish ware, few black inclusions, thick black core	
10*	Jar	425/4073/2	Reddish ware, few small black inclusions	Kochavi 2000: Figs. 10.1:6
11	Jar	425/4068/4	Reddish ware	Kochavi 2000: Fig. 8.12:22 Beck 1985: Fig 4:12
12	Jar	425/4085/3	Yellowish ware	As No. 11
13	Bowl	425/4072/1	Reddish ware, yellowish core	
14	Jar	427/4084	Reddish ware	
15*		425/4083	Reddish ware, large black inclusions	
16	Bowl	412/4054/1		Cole 1984: Pl. 5:f Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 103:11
17*	Bowl	422/4065/5	Reddish ware, black core with small inclusions	Kochavi 2000: Fig. 10.20:7 Cole 1984: Pl. 4:a
18	Bowl	412/4034/6	Pinkish ware	Cole 1984: Pl. 4:a
19	Bowl	412/4054/2	Yellowish ware, viscous, red strip painted on rim	Dever 1986: Pl. 5:21 Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 111:2 Beck 1975: Fig. 14:3
20	Jar	422/4065/6	Reddish ware, viscous	
21*	Jar	422/4065/2		
22	Jar	412/4034/4	Reddish ware	Dever 1986: Pl. 8:19 Cole 1984: Pl. 36:c
23	Jar	412/4052/2	Reddish ware, few inclusions	
24	Jar	412/4052/1	Reddish ware, few small white inclusions and few large inclusions	Beck 1985: Fig. 4:12

* Petrographically analyzed (see Cohen-Weinberger, this volume)

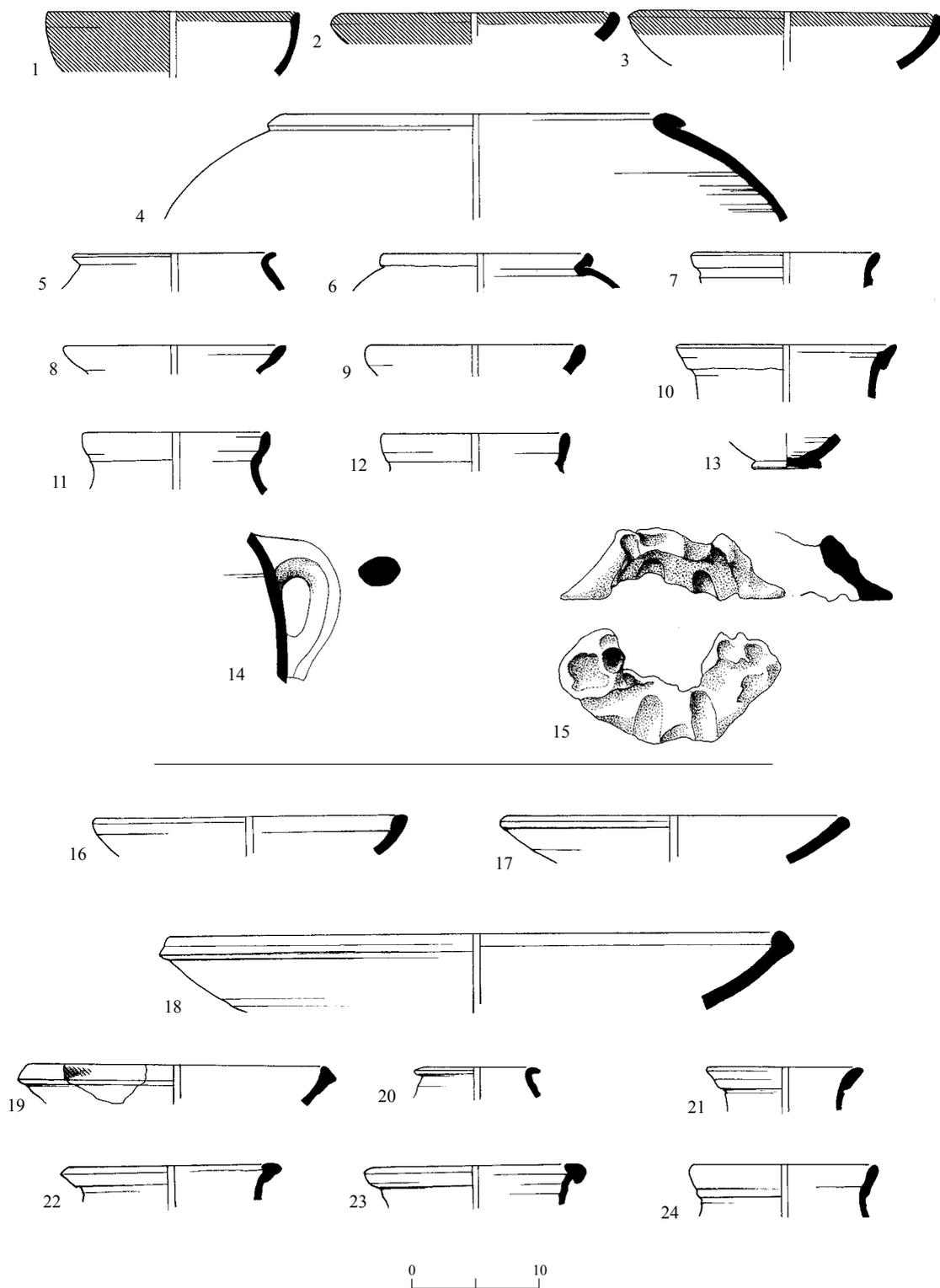


Fig. 12. Field I. The pottery from Feature 5: (1–15) from the combustion chamber; (16–24) from the fill above the kiln.

and abandoned. This division seems to be consistent with some typological differences between the pottery found in those two findspots. A petrographic study of samples of this material was undertaken by Cohen-Weinberger (this volume).

Pottery from the Combustion Chamber (L425).— The pottery assemblage from the combustion chamber included bowls, kraters jars, a jug, and a clay stand (prop?).

Bowls: Bowls in this assemblage are round with rounded rims (Fig. 12:1–3). Figure 12:3 has a red-painted rim. These bowls have disk, ring or flat bases, as is the case in assemblages from contemporary sites.

Kraters: Two types of holemouth kraters were distinguished in the assemblage. These vessels appear to be large and small kraters. The large krater is distinguished by its globular body and flaring rim (Fig. 12:4). Small kraters (Fig. 12:5, 6) may have been similar in form; however, the poor level of preservation precluded further analysis.

These vessels, both large (Fig. 12:4) and small (Fig. 12:5, 6), probably had ring or disk bases.

Jars: Two types of large storage jars were found, with elongated (Fig. 12:7–9, 11, 12) or flaring folded (Fig. 12:10) rims. These vessels have ovoid bodies and are generally adorned with two handles (Fig. 12:14).

Jar or Jug: The vessel fragment in Fig. 12:13 is probably a disk base of a medium-sized jar or jug.

Clay Stand (Prop?): This semicircular coil of clay with deep finger impressions was probably used for holding vessels in place while firing. A close parallel from a probable Middle Bronze Age context was found at Tel Megadim (Samuel Wolff, pers. comm.). Similar clay objects are reported from Roman kilns in Britain (Swan 1984:40, 66).

Pottery from Fill above the Kiln (L412, L422).— The fill included bowls and jars.

Bowls: Several bowls were recovered from the fill above the kiln. One has a rounded profile and a rounded rim similar to those found in the combustion chamber (Fig. 12:16; see above). Other examples display straight walls and rounded (Fig. 12:17) or folded (Fig. 12:18, 19) rims. Figure 12:19 has traces of red paint on its rim. Another type (Fig. 12:20) is a deep bowl with a globular body and an everted rim. As known from assemblages at contemporary sites, these types generally have disk, ring or flat bases.

Jars: Three types of large storage jars were recovered. One with an elongated rim was of a type found in the combustion chamber (Fig. 12:24). Jars of a second type, with flaring and folded rims, were also found in the combustion chamber (Fig. 12:21). The last type is a jar with an everted neck and a splayed and inverted rim (Fig. 12:22, 23). All these types generally have ovoid bodies and two handles.

Discussion

Based on the pottery from the two concentrations, the kiln itself and the layer of fill above, certain differences can be discerned between the two assemblages. Red slip and burnishing, characteristic ceramic treatments of MB IIA, appear in the pottery found within the combustion chamber. These decorative attributes are lacking in the pottery found in the fill above the kiln. Rounded, open bowls were encountered in both findspots, although straight-walled bowls were found only in the latter context. Both bowl types are characteristic of MB IIB (Amiran 1969:114). The bowl illustrated in Fig. 12:20, found atop the kiln, is also found only in MB IIB contexts.

Holemouth kraters were found at Tel Afeq in an MB IIA occupation. Kraters from MB IIA contexts, with everted and grooved rims, were found at Tel Zeror. Jars with elongated rims are characteristic of MB IIA, although they continue into MB IIB. This last type is represented in the pottery found within the combustion chamber; however, only one identifiable sherd of this

type (Fig. 12:24) appears in the fill covering the kiln. Jars with flaring necks and folded rims characteristic of MB IIA (Kochavi, Beck and Gophna 1979: 151) appear in both contexts. Jars with everted necks and inverted rims, such as Fig. 12:22, 23, seem to be present only in MB IIB contexts and were not found in the combustion chamber. According to these findings, it appears that the kiln was utilized during MB IIA. Later, after its abandonment, probably during MB IIB, the area was leveled and the fill above the kiln accumulated.

Area I/B, Feature 4: Well

This well (Sq B29; L403, L405; Plan 3; Fig. 13), located in the eastern corner of Area I/B, just 2 m south of the kiln (Feature 5), was discovered in a probe excavated mechanically prior to the excavation. The southeastern half of the well was excavated after its entire perimeter was defined.

The well has a round shaft (diam. c. 2.2 m, c. 2.1 m deep), dug into the *husmas* layer, reaching chalky bedrock below. During the excavation the water table rose, filling the shaft to a depth of c. 0.15 m. This facilitated the identification of Feature 4 as a well, assuming that the water table in antiquity was no lower than at present (Nir and Eldar 1987:4). Thus, it is most probable that the vertical shaft was deep enough to provide access to the water table.



Fig. 13. Field I, Feature 4. Well, looking north.

The well opening was likely higher than the level preserved. The shaft walls were covered with a thin (3 cm) layer of whitish material, believed to be a natural coating of dissolved chalky limestone, as the dense layer of *husmas* needed no additional support to retain its shape. An associated surface within was not found. Taking into consideration the overlaying fill, the likely depth of the well is estimated at c. 2.5 m. The fact that it was not especially deep and at the same time its diameter relatively wide, permitted easy extraction of water.

The well was cut and covered by a fill replete with organic material (L402). The fill in its upper reaches was dark and ashy (L403) and in its lower reaches was a light, whitish, clayey material c. 0.2 m thick (L405). Locus 403 contained a few sherds dating to MB IIB and LB I, as well as several animal bones (see Kehati, this volume). The only diagnostic sherd found in L405 (Fig. 14:6) is probably dated to LB I (see below).

The final stage of use is based on the pottery found in L405, with only one diagnostic sherd (Fig. 14:6), probably dated to LB I (see below). Nir and Eldar (1987:4) have suggested that usually the very lowest fills within wells contain material that dates their latest use. As later material was not found in the shaft, it appears the feature was intentionally filled almost immediately after it was abandoned or, at least by LB I, as it was not used as a refuse pit like wells in contemporary contexts at various sites (e.g., Marcus 1991:120–121; Oren et al. 1991:7).

Tzuk (1990:83–85, 94–96) has addressed the subject of wells during the Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age periods in the southern Levant and other regions, indicating they were widely employed; however, those known appear to be somewhat more sophisticated than the example from Tel Maloṭ, where the water table was so easily reached. One example of a well is known at Tel Nami, where it was found in the eastern part near the seashore (Marcus 1991). That well was excavated to a depth of 2.3 m. It is sub-rectangular in plan

(2.7 × 2.4 m) and lined with fieldstones. At Tel Aro'er (Oren et al. 1991), a well dating to the same period was excavated in the southern section of the settlement, c. 40 m from Naḥal Gerar. The well, 2 m in diameter, was plumbed to a depth of 11.5 m. It was lined with *kurkar* stones to a depth of 7 m, while the remainder of the shaft was cut into *kurkar* bedrock. Another well, dated to the Late Bronze Age, was excavated by the University of Pennsylvania expedition at Tell Bet She'an (Rowe 1930:13–14). It was 0.86 m in diameter and 13 m in depth, and was associated with the Stratum XIa temple (fourteenth century BCE).

Pottery of Feature 4

A few sherds were found in L403 and L405. Most are typical of the MB IIB and LB I horizons. They include open bowls (Fig. 14:1, 2), a carinated bowl (Fig. 14:3), a bowl base (Fig. 14:4), a cooking-pot rim (Fig. 14:5) and a lamp fragment (Fig. 14:7). The ring base presented in Fig. 14:6 is probably a fragment of a krater, also characteristic of the same chronological horizon. It would appear that the well was in use throughout most of the periods to which these sherds date, after which it was completely filled. As the area is full of this material, and as the well was not sealed

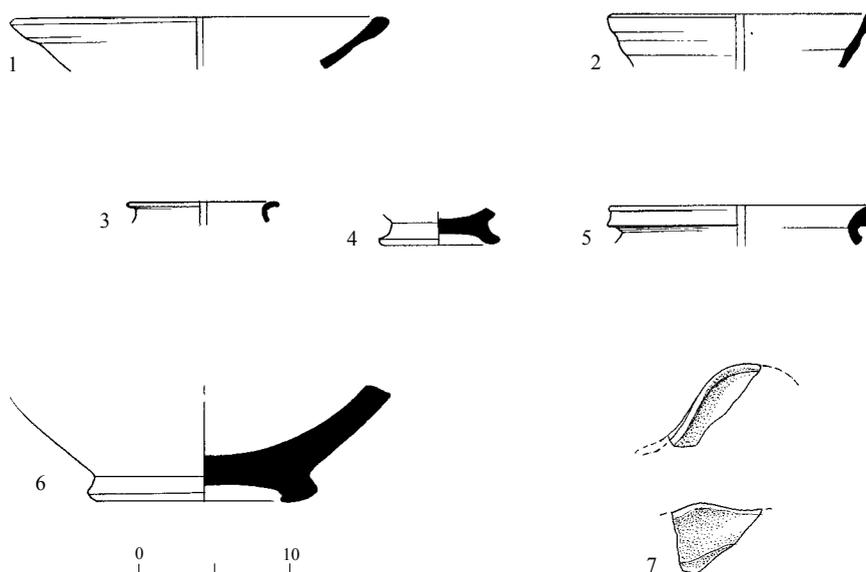


Fig. 14. Field I. The pottery from Feature 4.

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Description	Parallels
1	Bowl	403/4009/1	Reddish ware, few white inclusions, burnished from the inside and outside	Dothan 1971: Fig. 31:1 Tufnell 1940: Pl. XL B:73
2	Bowl	403/4007/2	Reddish ware	
3	Bowl	403/4013/1	Yellowish ware, few black inclusions	
4	Bowl	403/4006/2	Reddish ware	
5	Cooking pot	403/4005/2	Reddish brown ware, black thin core, few black inclusions and very few white inclusions	Tufnell 1940: Pl. LV B:354
6	Krater	405/4014/1	Reddish yellow ware, thick black core	
7	Lamp	403/4007/1	Reddish ware	

above, it seems that other interpretations could be given. There is no later material within the well; therefore, it was probably not in use after LB I.

THE IRON AGE

Area I/A, Feature 13: Cist Grave

This feature is a roughly rectangular cist grave, oriented east–west and cut into a layer of sandy soil (Plan 4; see Fig. 5). It was covered with a deposit of brownish red soil (c. 0.15 m thick) containing sherds of the PN period (L117). The western half of the grave was destroyed, leaving only c. 1.5 m of its length preserved. A minute probe (L119) into the cist determined the existence of a skull lying on its right side, facing north and resting on a sandy, hard-packed layer of soil. A directive of the Ministry of Religious Affairs forbade excavation, and therefore the grave remains untouched and the only means of dating it are typological parallels.

Locus 117 contained Neolithic material, which does not seem to date the tomb because there are no similar constructions known for that period. It appears to be fill, possibly derived from the construction of the cist when it cut into existing deposits. A more likely

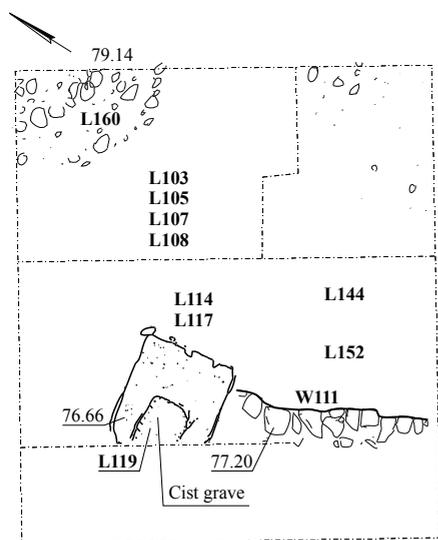
date for the grave is suggested by a group of graves found to the north of Tel Malot (Shmueli, forthcoming; Permit No. A-2119), dated to the tenth century BCE. Similar tombs have been found at Azor by M. Dothan (Ben-Shlomo 2004), where they are dated to Iron I. Accordingly, it is likely that Feature 13 dates to the Iron Age, although pottery of that period was not found in the present excavation.

THE BYZANTINE–EARLY ISLAMIC PERIODS

Area I/A, Feature 1: Building Remains

This feature denotes a scatter of building remains, including walls and floors (Plan 5) at the northwestern edge of Area I/A (Sq G6–7). In the eastern part of this feature, a modern trench (L122) cut archaeological remains. Two phases of occupation (a and b) were distinguished in this feature.

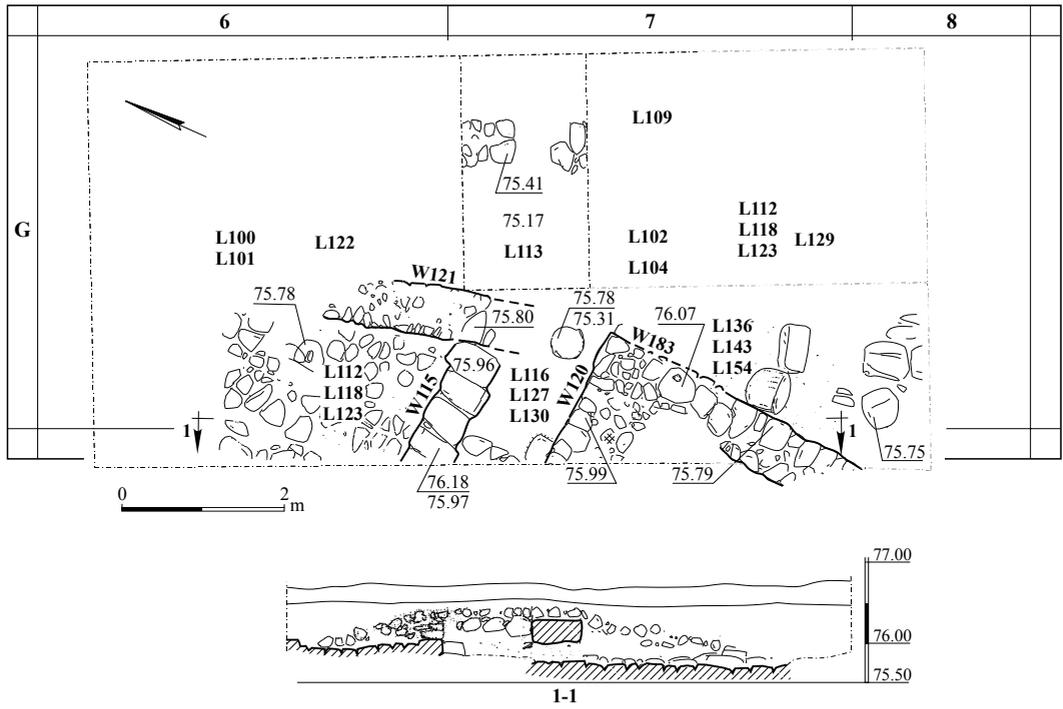
Phase b.— This phase is represented by W115 (Fig. 15), built of one row of large, dressed ashlars in a header arrangement, without mortar. The base of the wall is 0.25 m above the level of L127 of Phase a. From the north, W115 was abutted by a gravel surface, above which was rubble of a few stones (L112) that sealed the fill of Phase a (L118). During the dismantling of L112, several pottery sherds were found (see below). The corner formed by W120 and W183 continued in use during this period.



Plan 4. Field I, Area I/A, Sq D3.



Fig. 15. Field I, Feature 1. Wall 115, looking north.



Plan 5. Field I, Area I/A: plan and section.



Fig. 16. Field I, Feature 1. Building remains, looking northwest.

Phase a.— This is the northeastern corner of a room formed by W120 and W183 (Plan 5; Fig. 16). The walls are built of one row of ashlar, roughly dressed externally, and an inner face of small cobbles. East of W183, a light brown surface of lime and gravel (L154) was found, likely representing part of a floor of an additional room cut by the modern trench. Ashlars and part of a limestone column drum (diam. 0.48 m) on this surface constituted the rubble layer of the structure. A paved surface of flat stones (L123, L127) was found associated with W120. It was bordered on the east (L123) by W121, which was built of medium-sized stones on one face and small stones on its other face. Wall 121 was also cut by a modern trench. A storage jar (see Fig. 17:8) was found sunk into the floor (L127) in the corner formed by W120 and W183. The jar was found standing c. 0.1 m above the floor; its upper part was crushed, and sherds from it were strewn on the floor and dispersed throughout the fill above the floor (L116). The northern portion of the floor was covered by a thin, light brown fill (L118).

The Pottery from Feature 1

Phase b.— The pottery of Phase b (Fig. 17: 1–11) consists of sherds collected during the dismantling of L112.

Bowls (Fig. 17:1, 2): These are bases of Late Roman C3 family bowls, dated to the sixth–seventh centuries CE (Hayes 1972:329–338, Form 3F–H).

Cooking Pots (Fig. 17:3–5): Three sherds belonging to cooking pots were found. They are dated from the third to the eighth centuries CE. Number 3 is a cooking bowl or casserole with a rounded body (Magness 1993:211–212, Cooking Pot Form 1), and No. 4 is a lid, which probably belongs to a casserole of Form 1 (Magness 1993:215). Number 5 is a cooking pot with a short neck and a flattened rim (Magness 1993:219, Form 4A).

Storage Jars (Fig. 17:6–11): Four types of jars were determined in the assemblage. One storage jar with a narrow groove on its shoulder

(Fig. 17:6) is dated to the seventh century CE, as seen in assemblages from Caesarea (Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91–92, Fig. 1:4–7). Bag-shaped and short-necked jars with wide rims, with or without ridges beneath their necks (Fig. 17:7: cf. Riley 1975:26–27, Fig. 1-2, Type 1B; Magness 1993:223–225, Form 4C; and Fig. 18:16: cf. Tubb 1986:56, 60, Fig. 5:11; Magness 1993: 226, Form 5B), are characteristic of the sixth–eighth centuries CE. Three sherds of the elongated Gaza-type wine jars (Fig. 17:9–11) are dated to the sixth–seventh centuries CE, when such jars were in use (Majcherek 1995: Fig. 3:4).

Phase a.— The pottery of Phase a is presented in Fig. 17:12–19.

Bowls: Two types of bowls are present in this assemblage. One (Fig. 17:12) is known as Cypriot Red Slip Ware (henceforth CRS), dated to the sixth–seventh century CE (Hayes 1972:329–338, Form 3F–H). A second bowl type (Fig. 17:13) belongs to the Fine Byzantine Ware (FBW) family of bowls dated to the sixth–eighth centuries CE (Magness 1993:193–194, Form IB).

Cooking Pots: Three fragments of these vessels with handles have short vertical flaring necks (Fig. 17:14–16). They are dated to the fifth–eighth centuries CE by Magness (1993:219), who classified them as Form 4C.

Jars: Three types of jars or amphoras were found. One is bag-shaped (Fig. 17:17) with narrow shoulders and a low rim. The type appears at Caesarea in assemblages dated to the seventh century CE (Type 1B according to Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91, Fig. 1:6). A second jar type is Magness' (1993:230–231) Form 7, identified by its swollen neck, sloping shoulders and band-combed body. A third type (Fig. 17:19), Magness' (1993:231–233) Form 1B, is a holemouth with a short neck, rounded rim, thickened band below it and disk base. It is dated to the fifth–sixth centuries CE. The vessel illustrated in Fig. 17:18 is dated to the ninth or tenth century CE.

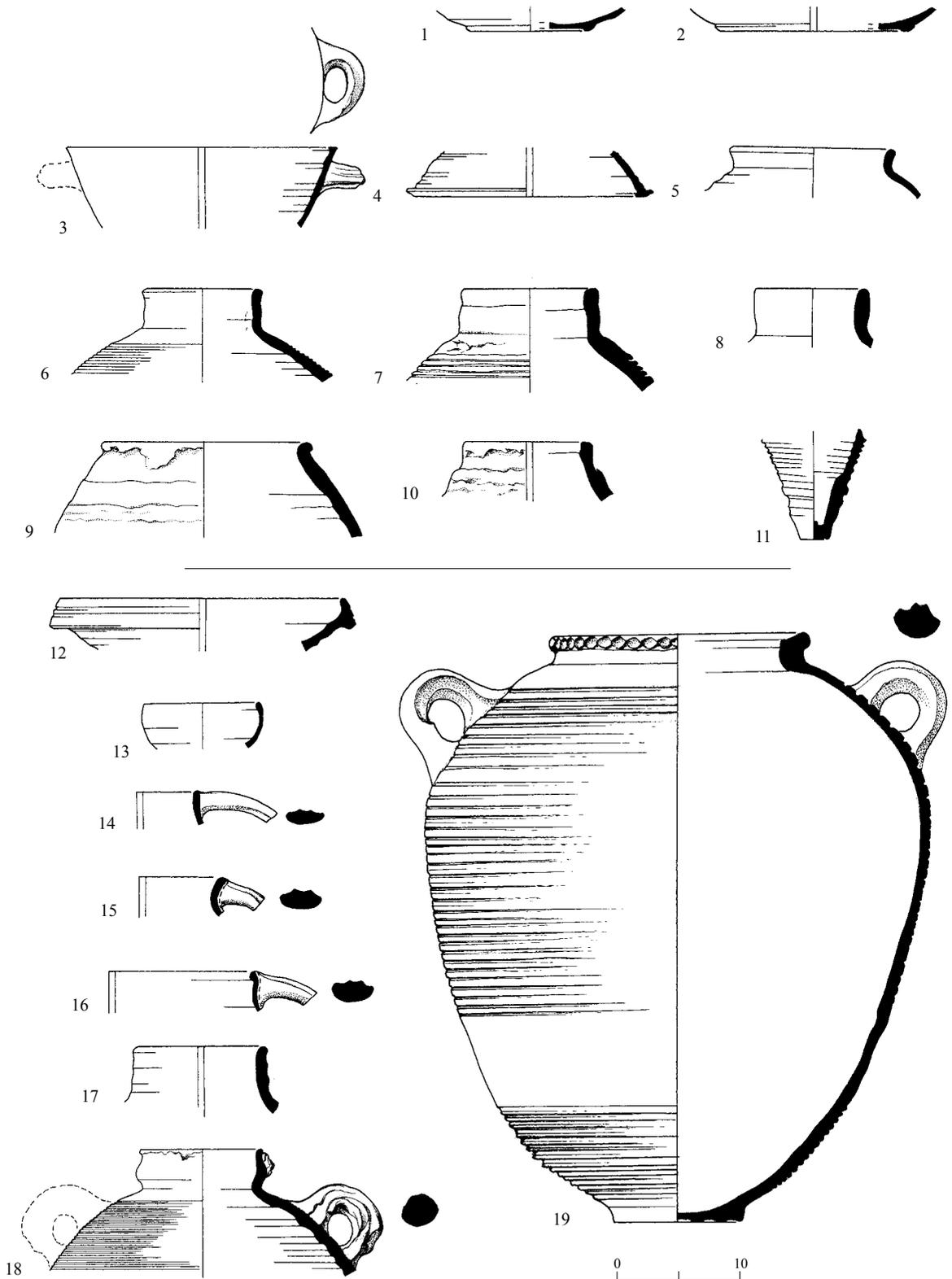


Fig. 17. Field I. Pottery from Feature 1: (1-11) Phase b; (12-19) Phase a.

◀ Fig. 17

No.	Vessels	Locus/Basket/Item	Description	Parallels	Date (CE)
1	Bowl LRC	112/1046/2	Reddish ware, red slip	Hayes 1972:329–338, Form 3F-H	6th–7th c.
2	Bowl LRC	112/1046/3	Reddish ware, red slip	Hayes 1972:329–338, Form 3F-H	6th–7th c.
3	Casserole	112/1037/1	Brown-red ware to brown on ext. face	Magness 1993:211–212, Form I	3th/4th–8th/9th c.
4	Lid	112/1046/6	Reddish ware	Magness 1993:215	4th–10th c.
5	Cooking pot	112/1046/5	Brown-red ware	Magness 1993:219, Form 4A	5th/6th–7th/8th c.
6	Jar	112/1035/1	Reddish ware, few tiny white inclusions, combing decoration on shoulder	Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91–92, Fig. 1:4–7	7th c.
7	Jar	112/1029/1	Brown-orange ware, few white inclusions	Riley 1975:26–27, Fig. 1-2, Type 1B Magness 1993:223–225, Form 4C	6th–8th c.
8	Jar	112/1043/1	Brown-orange ware, few tiny white inclusions	Tubb 1986:56, 60, Fig 5:11 Magness 1993:226, Form 5B	6th–8th c.
9	Jar	112/1046/1	Reddish brown ware, few gray inclusion	Adan-Bayewitz 1986: Fig. 1:9, 10; Majcherek 1995: Fig. 3:4	6th–7th c.
10	Jar	112/1044/1	Brown-reddish ware	Majcherek 1995: Fig. 3:4	6th–7th c.
11	Jar	112/1037/2	Reddish brown ware, few gray inclusions	Adan-Bayewitz 1986: Fig. 1:12, 13 Majcherek 1995: Fig. 3:4	6th–7th c.
12	Bowl CRS	116/1045/2	Brown-red ware, red slip on int. and ext.	Hayes 1972:379–382, Form 9B, Fig. 82:10	580/600–7th c.
13	Bowl FBW	116/1045/4	Orange ware	Magness 1993:193–194, Form 1B	7th–8th c.
14	Cooking pot	118/1050/2	Brown-red ware, white inclusions	Magness 1993:219, Form 4C	5th/6th–7th/8th c.
15	Cooking pot	118/1050/3	Brown-red ware, white inclusions	Adan-Bayewitz 1986:108, Fig. 4:2 Magness 1993:219, Form 4C	5th/6th–7th/8th c.
16	Cooking pot	118/1050/1	Brown ware, white inclusions		5th/6th–7th/8th c.
17	Jar	116/1048/1	Reddish ware, few white inclusions	Riley 1975:26–27, Fig. 1-2, Type 1B Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91, Fig. 1:6	6th–7th c.
18	Jar	116/1045/1	Reddish ware, few tiny white inclusions, combing decoration on shoulder	Magness 1993:230–231, Form 7	7th–10th c.
19	Jar	116/1052/		Magness 1993:231–233, Form 1B	5th–6th c.

The Dating of Feature 1

The following dating is suggested for the two phases of Feature 1, based on the pottery described above. The dating of Phase a is

based on the jar (Fig. 17:19) found *in situ*. It indicates a sixth-century CE date for this phase, i.e., the Byzantine period. Other sherds found in the fill of L127 support this dating, e.g.,

the imported bowl in Fig. 17:12. The jar (Fig. 17:18), attributed to this phase, appears in the seventh century CE and continues on into the tenth century CE. Thus, it could be intrusive from Phase b (see below).

Although most of the pottery found in Phase b appears during the sixth–seventh centuries CE, it is suggested here that this occupation should probably be dated to the seventh century CE, the late Byzantine and the Ummayyad periods, based on the jar presented in Fig. 17:6, which does not predate the seventh century.

Area I/A, Feature 11: Supporting Wall

A wall (W111) was found in the northern edge of Area I/A (Sq D3) on a slope east of the railway track (Plans 1, 2). It was built of one row of fieldstones with no bonding agent, leaning into the slope up to the east. The wall was constructed above Feature 13 (see above). East of the wall, a reddish brown fill (L114) was encountered. The eastern side of the wall was covered with a dark brown fill (L132, L108).

Coins from Feature 11⁵

One coin was found close to W111, and three other coins were found in fills above the wall. All these coins are dated to the second half of the fourth century CE. They are listed below:

1. Reg. No. 1070, L132, IAA 97661.

Constantius II, 355–361 CE.

Obv.: [- - -] Pearl-diademed draped bust r.

Rev.: SPES REI-[PVBLICE] Virtus l., holding globe and spear; in ex.: [- - -].

Æ, ↓, 1.67 g, 14 mm.

Cf. *LRBC* 2:87, No. 2053.

2. Reg. No. 1069, L132, IAA 97660.
383–395 CE.

Obv.: [- - -] Bust r.

Rev.: [- - -] Victory advancing l., dragging captive and holding trophy.

Æ, ↓, 0.68 g, 10 mm.

Cf. *LRBC* 2:89, No. 2183.

3. Reg. No. 1120, L144, IAA 97662.

Fourth century CE.

Obv.: [- - -] Bust r.

Rev.: [- - -] Victory advancing l.

Æ, ↓, 1.53 g, 14 mm.

4. Reg. No. 1025, L105, IAA 97659.

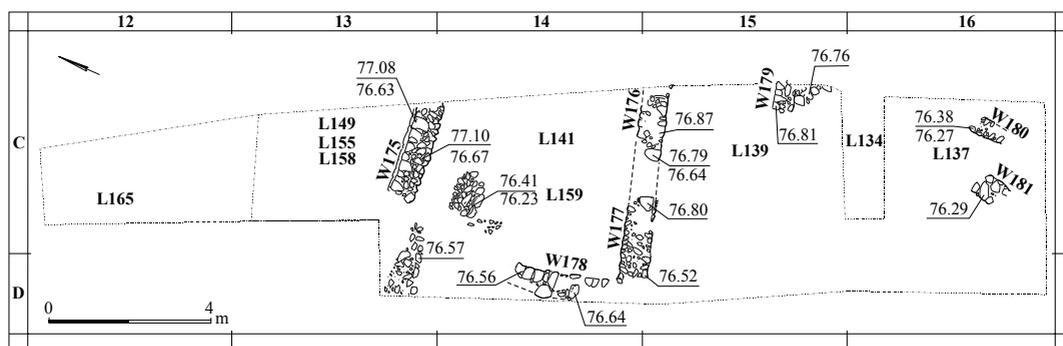
Fourth century CE.

Obv.: [- - -] Bust r.

Æ, 1.42 g, 10 mm.

Area I/A, Feature 3: Structural Remains

Several structural remains, including walls and floors, were found c. 30 m southeast of Feature 1, on the slope east of the railway (Sqs C12–16; Plan 6). Two phases, labeled a and b (from bottom to top), were distinguished in this feature. However, the stratigraphic relationship between the different architectural elements is uncertain because no definitive connections



Plan 6. Field I, Area I/A, Feature 3.

between the different walls and floors were found.

Phase a.— In Sq C14 the corner of a building formed by W176/177 and W178 (Fig. 18) was found. Only one course of W176/177 was preserved to a height of c. 0.2 m. Its southern face is a single row of medium- and small-sized ashlar, while its northern face was made of small stones. The foundation of the wall slopes down to the west, indicating the slope existed there when the wall was built. Wall 178 was only unearthed to the top of its uppermost preserved course where it was noted to be constructed of two rows of medium-sized stones. The foundations of W178 are lower than those of W177, as it was situated farther down the slope. To the northeast of this corner, a packed ashy light brown, earthen floor (L159) was exposed, with several patches of small-stone pavements. Potsherds recovered from the floor (see below) indicate a date in the Byzantine period. To the south of W176/177, near Feature 2, groups of arranged fieldstones were found on the top soil (W179, W180, W181), imbedded in a fill similar to that of L159. For this reason, these

stones are suggested to be related to the same phase as W176/177 and W178.

Phase b.— Approximately 5 m to the north of W177, a wall constructed of fieldstones (W175) was found preserved to a height of two courses, aligned in two rows with a rubble fill between. The northern line comprised medium-sized stones, while the southern line presented a mixture of medium- and small-sized stones. To the south of this wall, a dark brown fill (L141) overlaid the ashy floor (L159) of Phase a and also covered the top of W177. To the north of W175, a layer of medium- and small-sized stones (L158) was encountered.

The Pottery from Feature 3

Phase a.— Figure 19:1–7 illustrates potsherds from Phase a (L159).

Bowls: Two imported bowls were identified, belonging to the African Red Slip family (Fig. 19:1, 2). These forms date to the fifth century CE, and belong to Hayes' (1972:109–111, Fig. 18:2) Form 64. A medium, everted rim bowl (Fig. 19:3) is characteristic of the fourth–sixth



Fig. 18. Field I, Feature 3. Building remains, looking east.

centuries CE, corresponding to Magness' (1993:204–205) Form I.

Cooking Pots: Figure 19:4 represents a cooking pot dated to the seventh century CE,

as at Caesarea (Riley 1975:48, Fig. 111; Adan-Bayewitz 1986:108, Fig. 4:34).

Storage Jars: Two jars (Fig. 19:5, 6) are dated to the Late Roman period (Magness 1993:222–

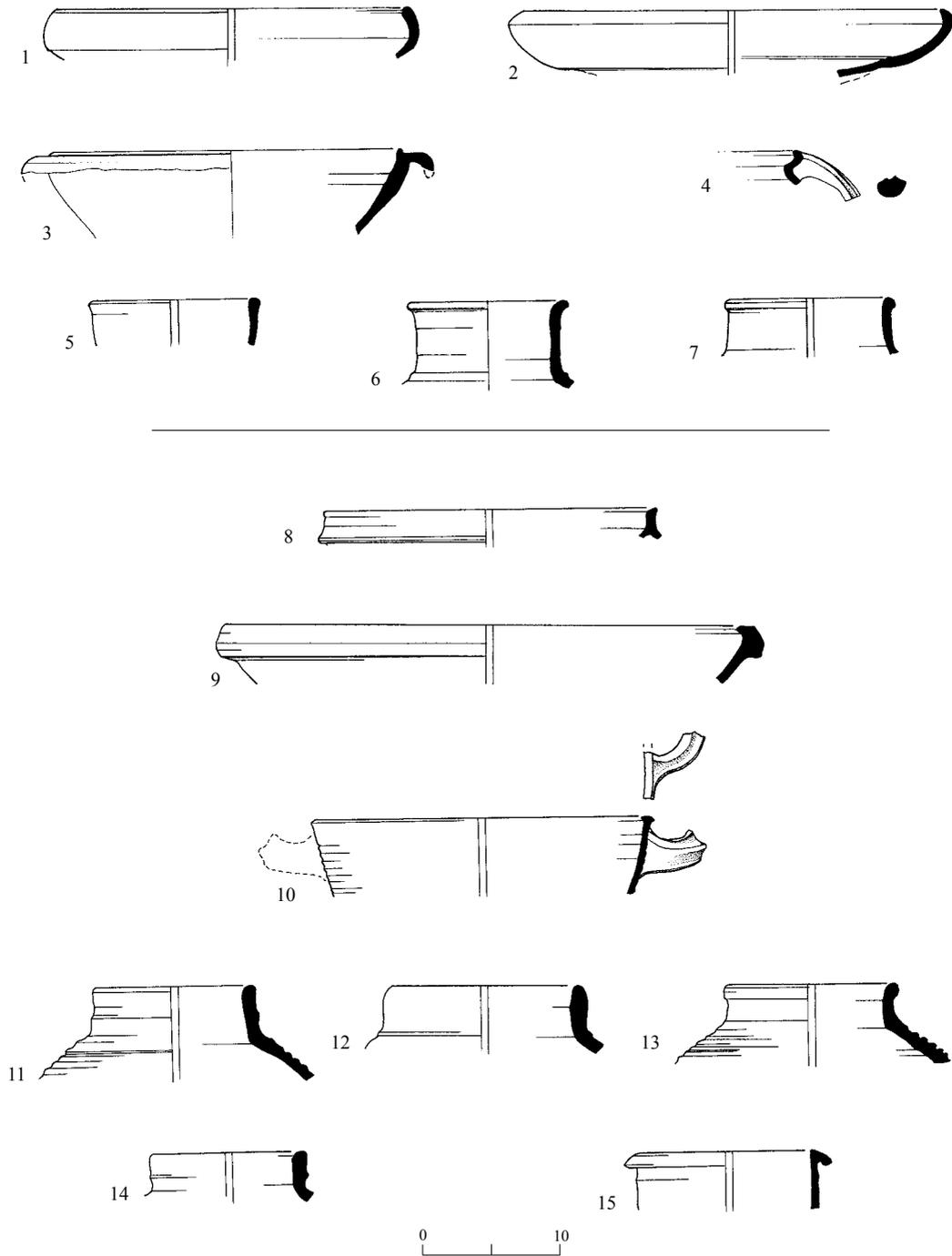


Fig. 19. Field I. Pottery from Feature 3: (1–7) Phase a; (8–15) Phase b.

223, Form 3; Johnson 1988:214–215, Fig. 7:53). A third (Fig. 19:7) is dated to the fifth–sixth centuries CE (Magness 1995:135, Fig. 2:8).

Phase b.— Pottery types found in Phase b are represented in Fig. 19:8–15.

Bowls and Kraters: Two types of open vessels were identified in the assemblage. The first is a bowl (Fig. 19:8), an imported LRC type. Figure 19:9 represents the second type, a Syrian *mortarium* dated to the sixth century CE (Calderon 2000:149–150). This krater has close parallels at Caesarea (Riley 1975:37, Figs. 41, 42).

Cooking Pot: This is a casserole (Fig. 19:10) corresponding to Magness' (1993:211–212) Form I.

Storage Jars: Several storage jars (Fig. 19:11–15) were found, dating to the Byzantine period, mainly to the sixth century CE (cf. Riley 1975:26–27, Fig. 1-2; Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91–97, Fig. 1:4; Magness 1993:224–225).

The Dating of Feature 3

The dating of Phase a is based on the few potsherds found in Floor 159, which are mainly imported bowls of the ARS family

◀ Fig. 19

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Date	Description	Parallels
1	Bowl ARS	159/1198/1	Early 5th c.	Red ware, red slip	Hayes 1972:109–111, Form 64, Fig. 18:2
2	Bowl ARS	159/1197/20	Early 5th c.	Red ware, red slip	Hayes 1972:109–111, Form 64, Fig. 18:2
3	Bowl	159/1196/1	3th/4th–6th c.		Magness 1993:204–205, Form I
4	Cooking pot	159/1198/5	7th c.	Brown-red ware	Riley 1975:48, Fig. 111; Adan-Bayewitz 1986:108, Fig. 4:34
5	Jar	159/1198/4	2nd–4th c.	Reddish ware	Magness 1993:222–223, Form 3
6	Jar	159/1197/1	4th c.	Red ware, thick core, few tiny white inclusions, remains of white slip on ext. face	Johnson 1988:214–215, Fig. 7:53
7	Jar	159/1197/	5th–6th c.	Reddish ware	Magness 1995:135, Fig. 2:8
8	Bowl LRC	158/1187/2	6th c.	Red ware, red/gray slip	Hayes 1972:333, 338, Form 3, Fig. 68:15
9	Krater	158/1154/1	6th c.	Brown-red ware, thick greenish core, white, black and red inclusions	Riley 1975:37, Fig. 41-42 Calderon 2000:149–150
10	Casserole	158/1163/2	3th/4th–8th/9th c.	Brown-red ware	Magness 1993:211–212, Form I
11	Jar	158/1163/1	5th–8th c.	Orange ware	Riley 1975: 26–27, Fig. 1-2, Type 1B Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91–97, Fig. 1:4
12	Jar	158/1187/7	5th–6th c.	Orange ware	Magness 1993:224, Form 5B
13	Jar	158/1163/8	5th–8th c.	Reddish ware, few tiny white inclusions	Magness 1994:135, Fig. 2:8
14	Jar	158/1187/8		Brown-red ware	
15	Jar	158/1187/5			

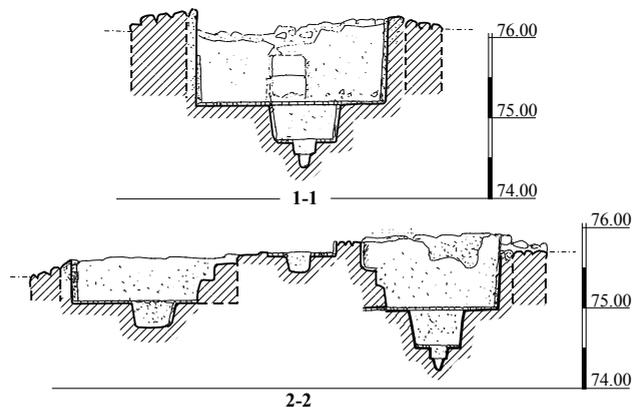
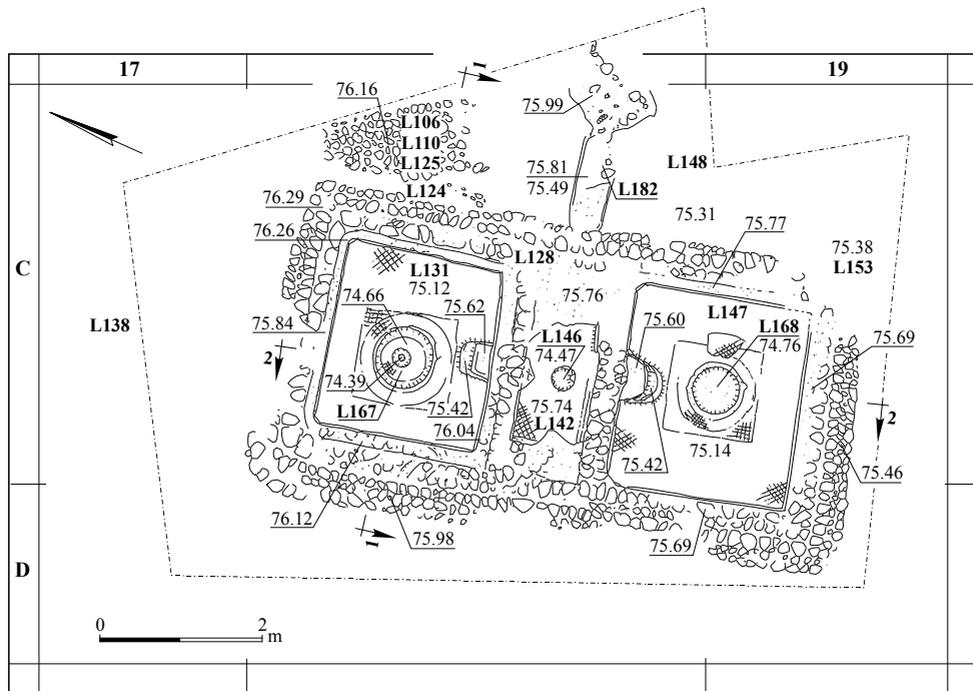
(Fig. 19:1, 2), everted rim bowls and a jar (Fig. 19:7), vessels characteristic of fifth-century CE assemblages. The Late Roman jar fragments (Fig. 19:5, 6) may be testimony to an earlier occupation level at the site, not yet encountered in excavations.

The chronological range of the potsherds found in Phase b is broader; however, they are of types that generally appear in assemblages of the sixth century CE. Accordingly, Phase b

is dated to this period. The cooking pot (Fig. 19:4) found in L159, dating to the seventh century, must be interpreted as intrusive, probably from Feature 1, Phase b.

Area I/A, Feature 2: Winepress

The winepress (c. 8.0 × 6.0 m; Plan 7; Fig. 20) is only a few meters away from Feature 3 in Area I/A (Sqs C–D/18–19), on the southern part



Plan 7. Field I, Area I/A, Feature 2: plan and sections.



Fig. 20. Field I, Feature 2. Winepress, looking northeast.

of the hill to the east of the railway. It has two, almost square, collecting vats (L137, L147) flanking a small, rectangular vat (L142). The press is enclosed by a perimeter wall (0.9 m wide), built of rows of small fieldstones. The vats were coated with reddish hydraulic plaster (1.0–1.5 cm thick) atop a layer of small fieldstones set in white mortar. Two steps provided access to each of the flanking vats, which had, as did the central vat, a centrally placed sump. The floor of the vats and their sumps were roughly hewn and paved with plain white tesserae (3 × 3 × 3 cm).

Small Vat (L142).— Measuring 1.24 × 0.86 m, this is the smallest of the vats; it was preserved to a maximum depth of 0.21 m at its northwesternmost extremity. Its walls were coated with hydraulic plaster and built directly atop the plain mosaic floor. The centrally placed, circular sump was 0.3 m in diameter and 0.27 m in depth.

Northern Collection Vat (L131).— This vat, 2.15 × 1.91 m and 1.05 m deep (Figs. 21, 22), has two steps on its southern side. The tesserae of its

floor were placed in different directions, possibly indicating the mosaic was repaired a number of times. Tesserae in the floor around the sump were laid in concentric circles (L167, and see below). Plaster on the walls covered parts of the mosaic, indicating it was of later date. The lower step cut the mosaic, indicating that the steps were also a later addition. The circular plan of the sump had a diameter of 0.73 m that tapered to a depth of 0.47 m, which measured 0.47 m in diameter. Concentrically arranged tesserae in the floor of the sump sealed in the base of a Gaza-type wine jar (Fig. 22).

Southern Collection Vat (L147).— This vat measured 2.38 × 2.19 m. Two steps, located in its northern wall, gave access to the mosaic floor 0.63 m below (Fig. 23). As in the northern vat, the lower step cut the mosaic. Similarly, the walls covered the mosaic at its edges. No design was observed in the floor; however, it was subjected to numerous repairs near its center. Its centrally located sump, circular in plan, was also similarly tapered, diminishing from a maximal diameter of 0.6 m at the floor level of the vat to 0.46 m at its own floor, 0.35 m below.



Fig. 21. Field I, Feature 2. Northern collecting vat, looking southeast.

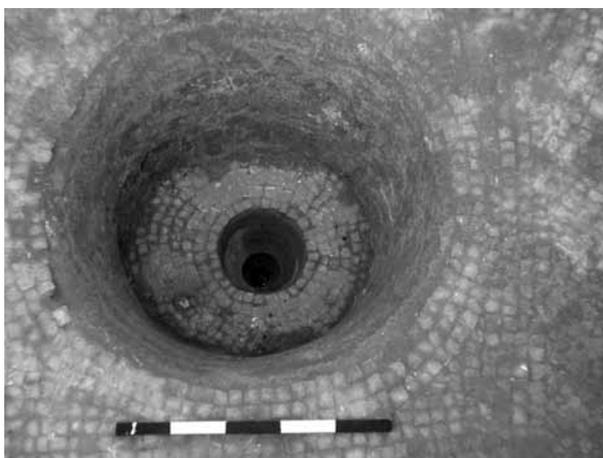


Fig. 22. Field I, Feature 2. Northern collecting vat, looking northwest.



Fig. 23. Field I, Feature 2. Southern collecting vat, looking northeast.

The Pottery from the Winepress

Numerous potsherds were found within the winepress; they are illustrated in Fig. 24. Most of the diagnostic sherds represent storage jars, mostly dating between the fifth and the eighth centuries CE (e.g., Fig. 24:7–11). They are made of a red-brown ware, most of them with tiny grits. A lid dated to the same time span (Fig. 24:13) was found. Also found in the winepress were some sherds made of buff ware, dating to the ninth–tenth centuries CE (Fig. 24:12).

Discussion

The installation represented in Feature 2 is a composite type of winepress with intermediate and collection vats flanking a treading floor (Frankel 1999:150). A somewhat similar

winepress was found in Area E of the ‘Third Mile Estate’ near Ashqelon (Yisrael 2001:219). The eastern wing of a winepress at Rehovot (south of Kh. Deiran; Roll and Ayalon 1981:111–116), dated to the sixth century CE, is also very similar to our Feature 2. In the center of the Rehovot winepress was a treading floor and around it were intermediate and collection vats (Roll and Ayalon 1981: Fig. 2). In the center of the treading floor was a stone platform with a hole for a screw-type press. From the eastern edge of the treading floor, a ceramic drainpipe conducted fluid to an intermediate vat. Two pipes led from the intermediate vat to collection vats to the north and south. Steps were found in the northern collection vat beneath the pipe. In the center of the collection vats, two storage

Fig. 24 ▶

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Date (CE)	Description	Parallels
1	Bowl	131/1076/1	9th–10th c.	Brown-red ware, gray core, few large white inclusions	Baramki 1942: Fig. 10:9
2	Bowl FBW	167/1178/1	8th–9th c.	Brown-orange ware, remains of white slip on ext. face, red decoration painted near the rim	Magness 1993:193–194, Form 1A
3	Krater	147/1135/1	6th c.	Brown-red ware, thick greenish core, white, black and red inclusions	Riley 1975:37, Fig. 41–42
4	Cooking pot	131/1173/4	5th/6th–7th/8th c.	Brown-red ware	Magness 1993:219, Form 4C
5	Cooking pot	131/1136/1	5th/6th–7th/8th c.	Brown-red ware	Magness 1993:219, Form 4A
6	Jar	147/1166/1		Brown-red ware, many white inclusions	
7	Jar	154/1168/1	6th–7th c.	Brown ware, few tiny white inclusions	Adan-Bayewitz 1986:105, Fig. 3:3
8	Jar	131/1173/2	7th–8th c.	Reddish brown ware, many white inclusions	Cohen-Finkelstein 1997:31, Fig. 6:11
9	Jar	131/1114/2	7th–8th c.	Reddish brown ware, many tiny white inclusions	Tushingham 1985: Fig. 30:33 Magness 1993:82
10	Jar	131/1165/2	6th–8th c.	Pinkish brown ware	Magness 1993:227–230, Form 6B
11	Jar	131/1173/3	5th–early 7th c.	Reddish ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1986:91, Fig. 1:7
12	Jar	147/1126/1	9th–10th c.	Buff ware	Baramki 1942: Fig. 4:11
13	Lid	167/1178/2	6th–8th c.	Reddish brown ware, many tiny white inclusions	Magness 1993:247, Form 1
14	Stopper	168/1179/3		Chalk	

jars were found, placed there for collecting the dregs resulting from sedimentation.

It may be assumed that the vats of Feature 2 also had drains, which were not preserved. They could have been of ceramic, or carved

in stone as in Feature 15 (see below). A stopper, such as that illustrated in Fig. 24:14, could have been utilized for storage jars, or alternatively, as a sluice gate to prevent liquid from flowing into a collection vat. The

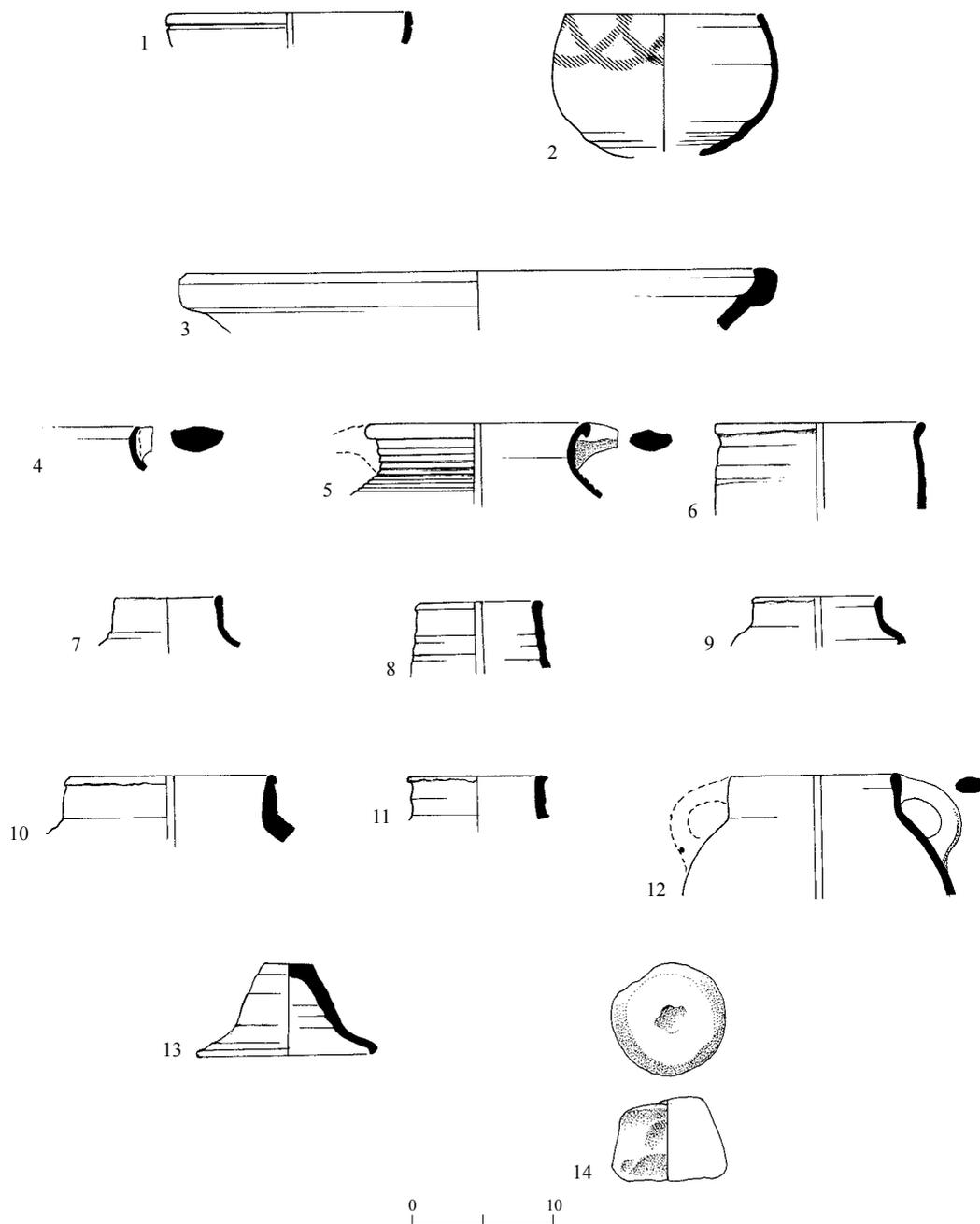


Fig. 24. Field I, Feature 2. Pottery (1–13) and stone (14) finds from the winepress.

existence of a drainpipe on top of the steps is rare. As in the case of the Rehovot winepress, the jar base in the northern collection vat was surely used to collect solid sediments. It is likely that as in the Rehovot and Ashqelon examples, this press had a treading floor to the northeast that was not preserved. A layer of pebbles (L125) in the eastern part of Sq C18 may indicate the foundation for such a treading floor. Because the terrain to the east of the press was higher than the area of the vats, it seems likely a treading floor, or any other structures, would have been more subject to erosion, and therefore, did not survive. If this is the case, it is possible that Feature 2 is one of a small group of winepresses that are of a subtype known as ‘southern complex winepresses’, described by Frankel and Ayalon (1981; Frankel 1999:150).

The construction and primary utilization of the winepress (Feature 2) is dated on the basis of most of the pottery found in the vats and the storage-jar base in the northern vat to the Byzantine period. Pottery found in fills in the vats dates also to the Abbasid period. Pottery of the latter period likely indicates occupation or some activity in that period in adjacent areas of the winepress.

Area I/B, Feature 6: Rectangular Tomb(?)

A rectangular structure (1.75 m wide, at least 2 m long; Plan 3; Fig. 25), oriented east–west, was built above a *husmas* layer over the earlier remains of Feature 12. Its northern (W428), western (W431) and southern (W432) walls were built of one row of small and medium-sized fieldstones bonded with white mortar. A gap 0.65 m wide was found in the northern wall. The structure was filled with light brown soil (L432) containing very few potsherds.

Above and outside this structure a very light brown fill (L416–L426), with many small stones and large quantities of ceramics, mainly of buff-colored ware, was found. The diagnostic shapes are presented in Fig. 26, including cooking pots (Fig. 26:1), a lid (Fig. 26:2) and several jar rims (Fig. 26:3, 4). The base fragments in Fig. 26:5, 6 probably belong to a jug and a bowl (respectively). All these sherds should be dated to the seventh–eighth centuries CE, and possibly later (e.g., Fig. 26:5).

North of this structure, near the edge of the excavation, a concentration of human bones was exposed. Possibly, Feature 6 was a tomb that was cleaned and its contents scattered nearby, which would account for the human



Fig. 25. Field I, Feature 6. Rectangular tomb(?) above earlier Feature 12, looking southwest.

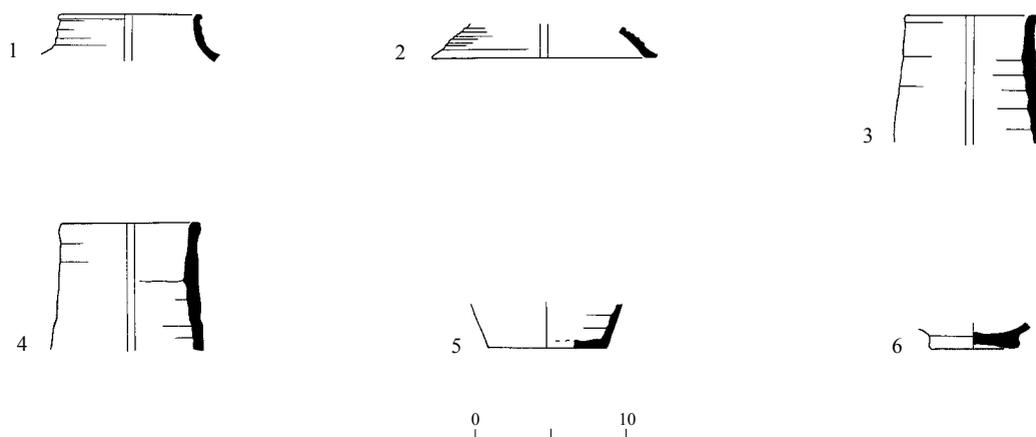


Fig. 26. Field I. Pottery from Feature 6.

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Date (CE)	Description	Parallels
1	Cooking pot	416/4050/7	6th–8th c.	Red-brown ware, few tiny white inclusions	
2	Lid	416/4056/22	8th–9th c.	Brown-red ware, few white and black inclusions	Shalem 2002:156–161, Fig. 9:4
3	Jar	416/4056/3	7th–8th c.	Buff ware	Cohen-Finkelstein 1997:31, Fig. 6:11
4	Jar	416/4056/8	7th–8th c.	Buff ware	As No. 3
5	Jug	416/4056/2	9th–10th c.	Buff ware	de Vaux 1945: Fig. III:16–24
6	Base	416/4050/2		Buff ware	

remains. According to the ceramic finds from the fill around the structure, it too should be dated to the Abbasid period.

Area I/B, Feature 9: Tomb(?)

Outlines of a cist-like structure of fieldstones, covered with large stone slabs, were found about 2 m east of Feature 6, near the edge of the excavation, about 0.45 m beneath the modern surface. It was oriented east–west and is presumably a tomb. It was not excavated due to a directive issued by the religious authorities.

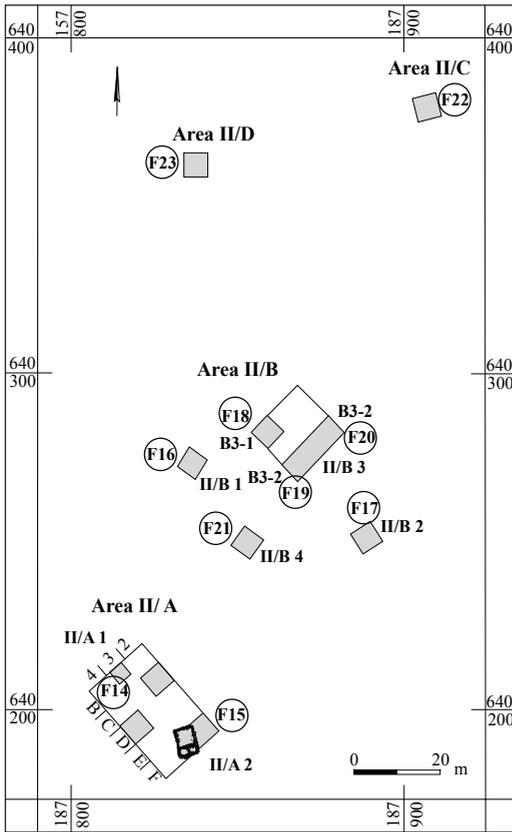
FIELD II

Field II is located on a low rise bisected by Naḥal ‘Eqron, c. 300 m southeast of Field I (see

Fig. 1). The streambed crosses Field II, forming two gentle slopes, one to the northwest and the other to the southeast. Archaeological remains were discovered in a *ḥamra* layer covered with a red-brown layer of agricultural soil planted with fruit trees, removed by mechanical means prior to the excavation.⁶ Four areas (II/A, II/B, II/C and II/D) were excavated. Area II/A was located in the south, Area II/B in the center and Areas II/C and II/D in the north (Plan 8). As in Field I, individual features were numbered, and accordingly, the discussion below corresponds to their classification.

AREA II/A

Area II/A was divided into two subareas, II/A1 and II/A2. Two features were encountered.



Plan 8. Location of excavated areas in Field II.

Area II/A1, Feature 14: Pit

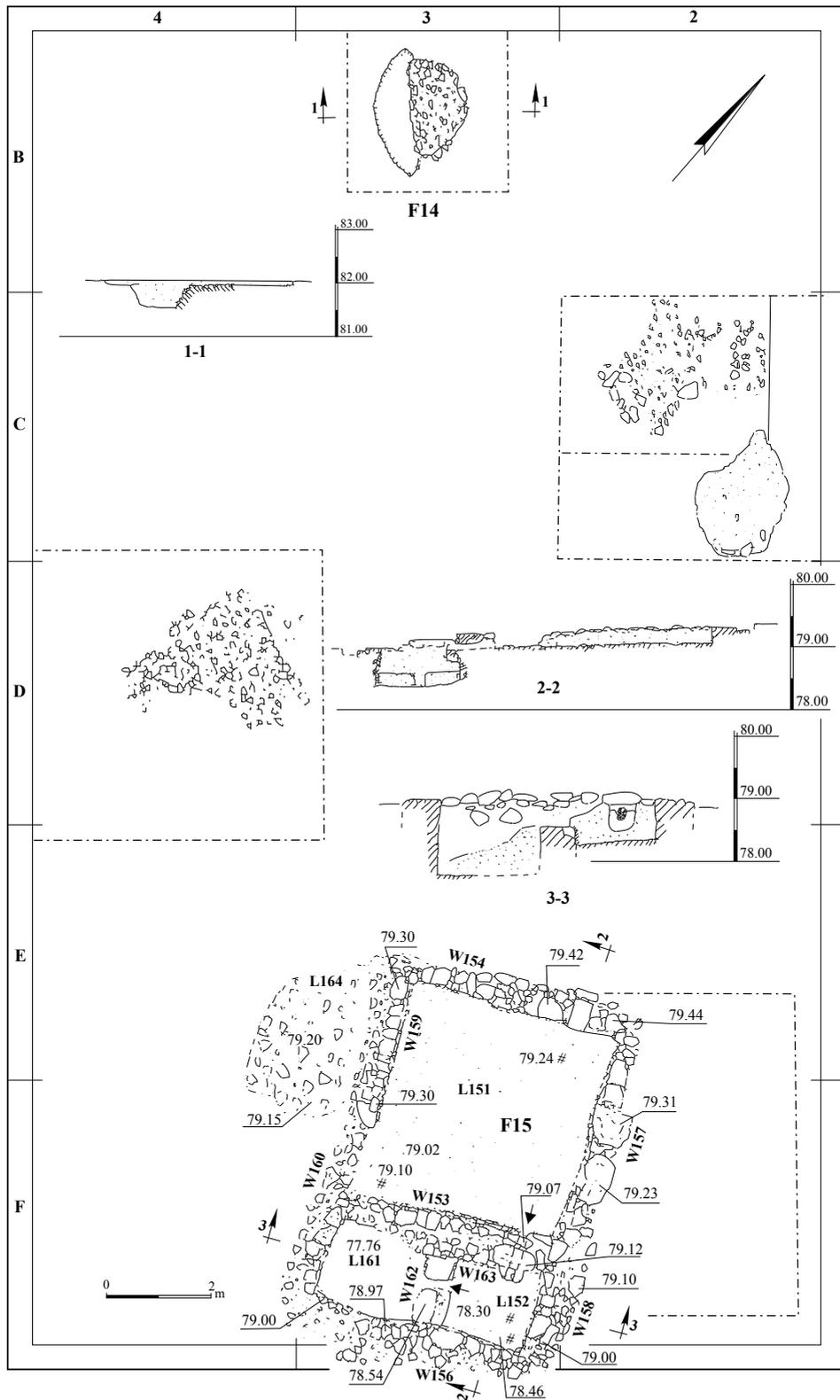
This feature was identified as a pit containing finds dated to the Chalcolithic period. It is characterized by a circular contour (diam. c. 1.3 m), excavated 0.35 m into the *hamra* layer (Fig. 27; Plan 9). Feature 14 contained small-sized stones (c. $0.10 \times 0.05 \times 0.05$ m), flint artifacts, a ground-stone tool and a lump of *hamra* (L110).

Area II/A2, Feature 15: Winepress

This feature is a winepress placed in a depression excavated into the *hamra* (Figs. 28–30; Plan 9). It had a shallow (0.3 m deep) square treading floor (L151; 3.4×3.4 m), a square intermediate vat (L152; 1.3×1.3 m, 0.8 m deep) and a rectangular collection vat (L161; 1.6×1.3 m, 1.2 m deep). The walls (W153, W154, W157 and W159) were built of small- and medium-sized fieldstones, and preserved one course high. The treading floor and the interior faces of the walls were covered with a thick layer of whitish plaster. A pipe built into W153 funneled liquid from the treading



Fig. 27. Field II, Feature 14. Pit, looking west.



Plan 9. Field II, Area II/A: plan and sections.



Fig. 28. Field II, Feature 15. Winepress, a general view, looking east.



Fig. 29. Field II, Feature 15. Winepress, a general view, looking northeast.



Fig. 30. Field II, Feature 15. Winepress, intermediary vat (L151), looking north.

floor to the intermediate vat. Two layers of c. 5 cm thick plaster were found covering the treading floor and the vats; they contained inclusions of a Mediterranean species of shell (*Glycemeris sp.*). The walls of the vats were constructed in the same fashion as W153 and W159. A gentle slope in the intermediate vat permitted liquids to flow through a channel in a single stone of W162 into the collection vat (Fig. 30). Locus 164, a partially preserved layer of fist-sized stones adjacent to the northwestern segment of W159, was apparently a floor used for activities associated with the winepress.

Pottery from the Winepress

The fill above the treading floor and in the collecting vat and storage pits yielded several diagnostic sherds dating to two periods, the Persian and the Hellenistic. The following are the characteristic types.

Kraters or Holemouth Jars.— Three different types of rims were found in the collection pit: two have thickened, externally grooved rims (Fig. 31:1, 2), while the third has a tapered lip and sharp, exterior overhang (Fig. 31:3). As they are very fragmentary, and handles were not found to match the rims, it is impossible to determine whether they belong to kraters or holemouth jars. Similar grooved rims were found at Dor (Stern 1995: Fig. 2.5:3-3), Tel Mevorakh (Stern 1982:99; 1995:58), Ashdod (Porath 1974: Fig. 4:13) and Qadum (Stern and Magen 1984: Fig. 6:4-6). Jars with tapered rims and overhangs have been found at Apollonia (Tal 1999: Figs. 4.12:1; 4.22:12). Based on these parallels, the date of the Tel Maloṭ fragments can tentatively be attributed to the fifth-fourth centuries BCE.

Bowls.— Two types of bowl rims were found. Figure 31:4 presumably belongs to a hemispherical bowl of a good quality ware, possibly similar to some vessels found at Apollonia (Tal 1999: Fig. 4.35:4). According

to Tal (1999:154), similar bowls of this quality were found in Persian, as well as in Hellenistic, contexts. At Gezer (Gitin 1990: Pl. 38:14), a similar bowl is dated to the mid-second century BCE. The second type (Fig. 31:5), a slightly carinated bowl with an everted, rounded rim and horizontal loop handles, is fashioned out of ordinary quality clay. This type (Lapp 1961:204, Type 151.4; Gitin 1990:91-92, Pl.43:12, Type 206B) is dated between the second century and the mid-first centuries BCE. Additional parallels are found in Apollonia (Fischer and Tal 1999:236), Gezer (Gitin 1990:249) and Maresha (Levine 2003:86-87). Two ring bases (Fig. 31: 6, 7) and a concave disk base (Fig. 31: 8) may belong to inverted-rim bowls or shallow plates, types known to date to the Hellenistic period (e.g. Gitin 1990:246-247, 253, Pl. 38:18-20; Fischer and Tal 1999:238, Figs. 5.11:10; 5.12:11-15).

Cooking Pot.— This fragment of a cooking pot and handle (Fig. 31:9) has an everted, flattened rim and a long handle. This is Lapp's (1961:185) Type 71.1C, dated to the Hellenistic period (for additional parallels, see Fischer and Tal 1999:238-239, Fig. 5.13:8).

Storage Jars.— Rim and neck fragments of two types of storage jars were recovered from the collection and storage pits. One type (Fig. 31:10), characterized by a square thickened rim and elongated bag-shaped body, may be identified with Lapp's (1961:146) Type 11.2 and with Gitin's (1990:239, Pl. 34:17-22) Type 161D. This type dates to the second-first centuries BCE. The second type, characterized by pronounced, everted rims and high necks, is represented by two variants (Fig. 31:11, 12). These jars are similar to Gitin's (1990:81) Type 164, with a cylindrical or ovoid-shaped body. Similar vessels were dated to the mid-second century BCE at Gezer (Gitin 1990:240, Pl. 34:24, 25) and Apollonia (Fischer and Tal 1999:240, Fig. 5.15:6, 7).

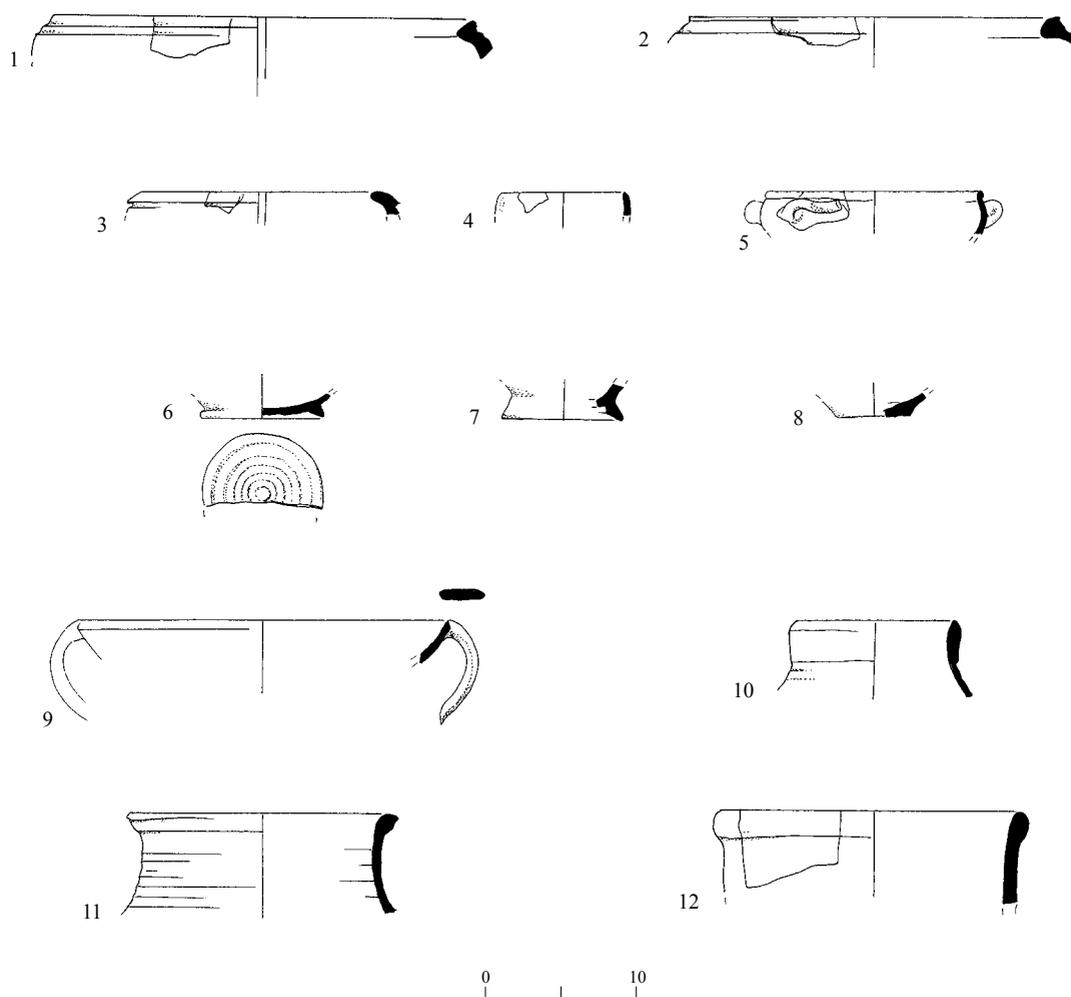


Fig. 31. Field II. Pottery from Feature 15.

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Description
1	Krater/holemouth jar	151/1515/1	Reddish yellow clay, pink cover
2	Krater/holemouth jar	151/1507/1	Yellowish red clay, light gray core
3	Krater/holemouth jar	150/1512	Yellowish red clay
4	Bowl	152/1508/1	Reddish yellow clay
5	Bowl	152/1508/2	Reddish yellow clay
6	Bowl, base	151/1507/2	Reddish yellow clay, few white grits, gray core
7	Bowl	161/1515/2	Reddish yellow clay, pink cover, gray core
8	Bowl	151/1507/3	Reddish yellow clay, white grits
9	Cooking pot	161/1513/1	Yellowish red clay, dark gray core
10	Jar	155/1511	Pink clay, small gray grits
11	Jar	161/1513/2	Reddish yellow clay, few medium white grits
12	Jar	151/1502	Reddish yellow clay, pink cover

Discussion

The pottery recovered from the fills above the treading floor and within the vats presents a range beginning in the Late Persian through the Late Hellenistic periods. As the pottery was found within fills, it cannot be used to date the winepress with accuracy; however, it is obvious the pottery inside the winepress was deposited after the installation went out of use, giving a *terminus ante quem* in the second–first centuries BCE for utilization of Feature 15.

This feature is an example of Frankel's (1984:85; 1999:149–150) 'four rectangle plan winepresses' (T 91), a category that dates from Iron II until the Roman period. Presses of this type were common in the central region (Frankel 1999:149–150). The closest parallels to Feature 15 are two winepresses (Nos. 255 and 556) uncovered at Tel Mikhal, dated to the Hellenistic period (Herzog 1989:168–170, 176, Figs. 12.4; 12.11; Pls. 44–47). Number 255 is more reminiscent of this Tel Maloṭ example in size and simplicity; however, both of the Tel Mikhal presses are similar to Feature 15 in concept and construction techniques. Winepress 556 displayed a stone surface adjacent to the treading floor and vats similar to the Tel Maloṭ press (L164; see Plan 9).

AREA II/B

Area II/B was divided into four subareas, labeled Areas II/B1 to II/B4, excavated as independent units with no relation to a grid.

Area II/B1, Feature 16: Pit

This is a circular pit excavated into the *hamra* layer in the southeastern part of Area B. The pit (diam. c. 2 m, c. 0.7 m deep) contained many stones of various dimensions and flint artifacts (L202; see below).

Area II/B2, Feature 17: Pit

This is a circular pit (diam. c. 1.8 m, c. 0.5 m deep), located in the southeastern part of Area

II/B. It was cut into the *hamra* layer (L252; Fig. 32) and contained gray-brown soil, small-sized stones (c. 0.15 × 0.10 × 0.05 m), flint artifacts and a ground-stone tool. The pit is tentatively dated to the Pottery Neolithic period on the basis of the flint artifacts and stone tools found within (see below, The Flint Assemblages and Ground Stone Tools).

Area II/B3, Feature 18: Pit

This is a shallow circular pit (diam. c. 1.8 m, c. 0.3 m deep) located in the western part of Area IIB (Plan 10), excavated into the *hamra* layer. It contained small flagstones (c. 0.7 × 0.6 × 0.1, 0.3 × 0.3 × 0.1 m) and small cobbles (0.20 × 0.20 × 15 m) in its upper part and dark gray-brown soil and stones (0.20 × 0.15 × 0.15 m) below (L276). The fill included pottery sherds (see below) from the Chalcolithic period and flint artifacts. Flint artifacts were also collected from topsoil around the pit (L275).

The Pottery from Feature 18

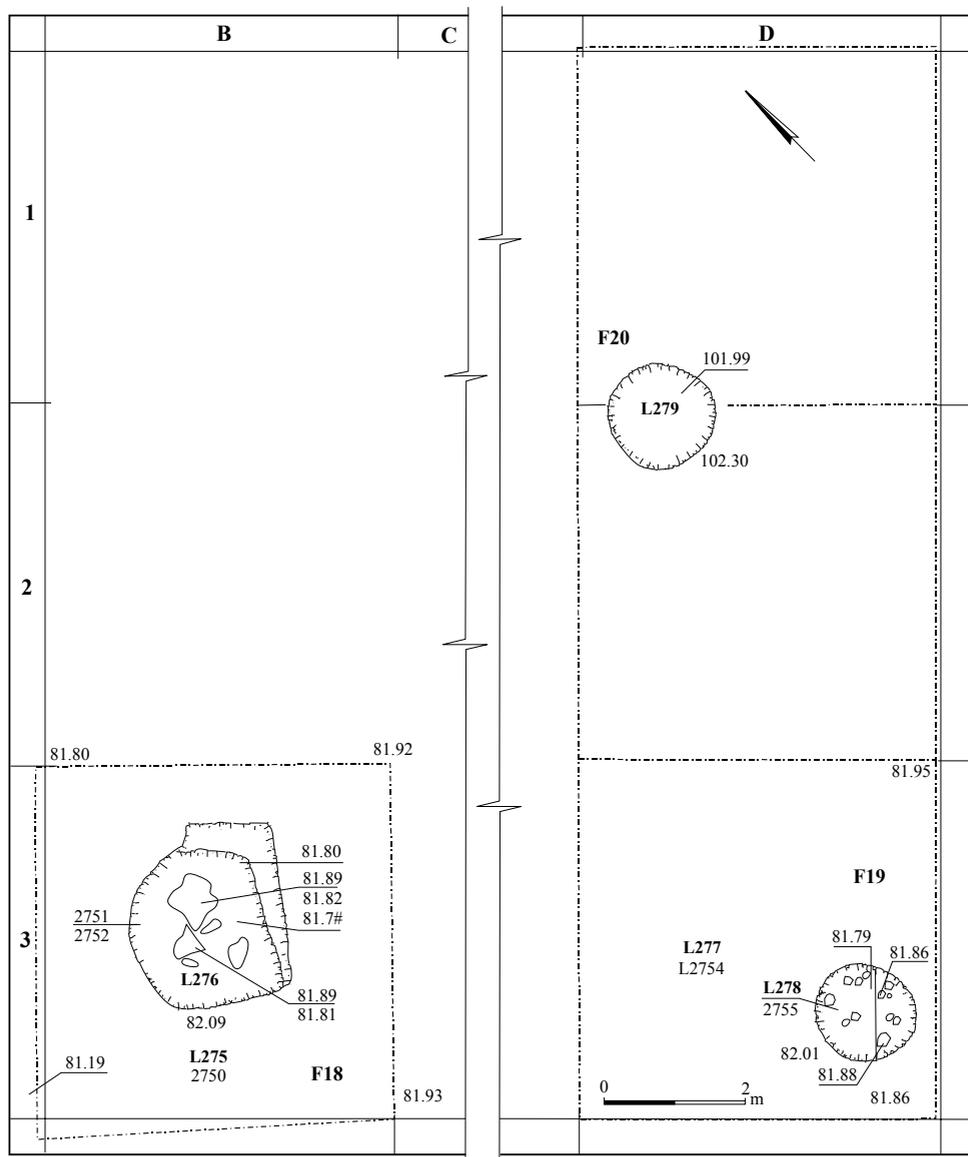
All diagnostic sherds of the pit are presented in Fig. 33.



Fig. 32. Field II, Feature 17. Pit.

Bowls.— Two subtypes of bowls are present, both of which belong to a type commonly described as “V-shaped”. Figure 33:1 is medium-sized with a tapered rim (cf. Henessy 1969: Fig. 5:1; Perrot and Ladiray 1980: Fig. 13:22). According to Commenge-Pellerin’s (1990) typology, this is a Type 3 bowl; in Garfinkel’s (1999:210) typology it is Type A2.

The bowls in Fig. 33:2–5 are small (average diam. 16 cm) with tapered, red-painted rims (i.e., ‘lipstick’; cf. Perrot and Ladiray 1980: Fig. 69:25; Commenge-Pellerin 1990: Fig. 18:1; Gilead and Goren 1995: Fig. 4.2:3). This corresponds to Type 1 of Commenge-Pellerin (1990) and Type A1 according to Garfinkel (1999:210).



Plan 10. Field II, B3; Features 18–20.

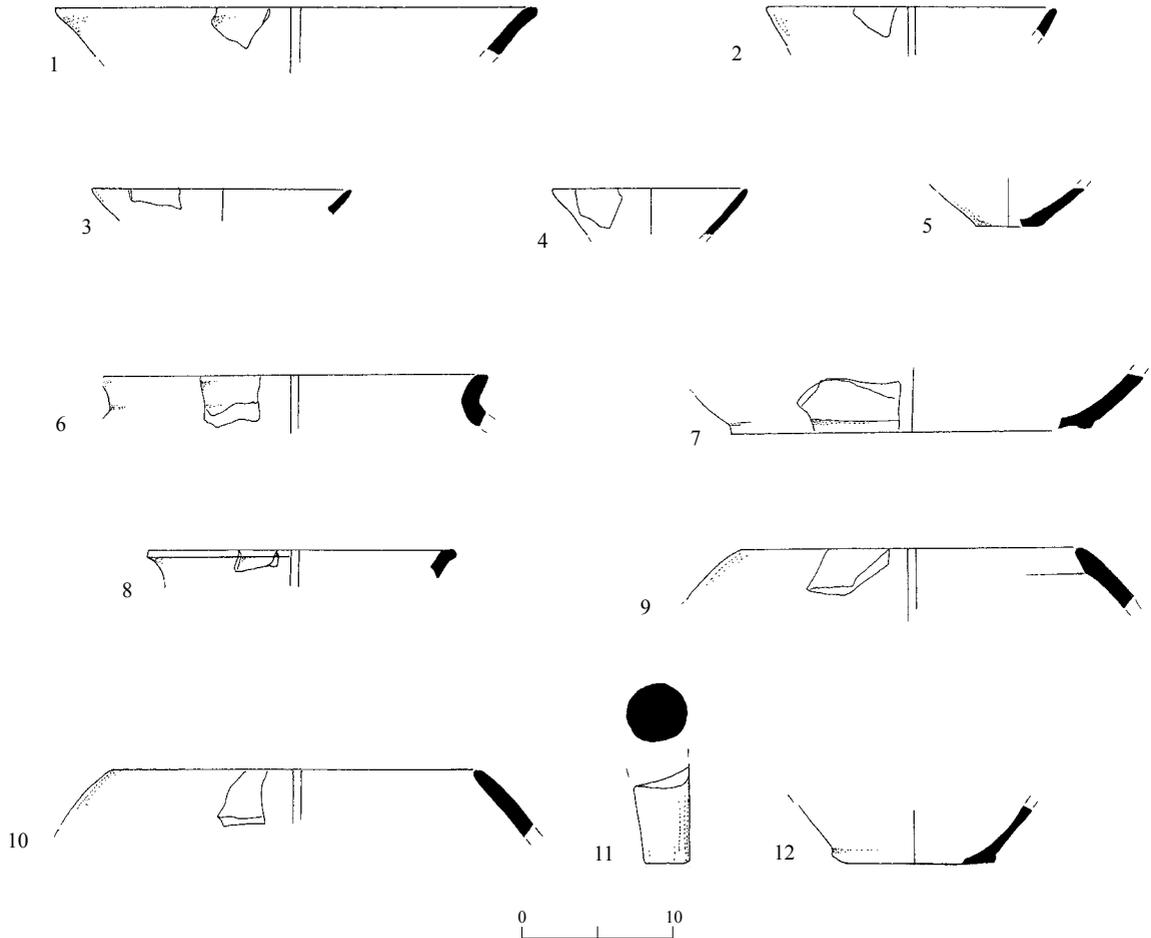


Fig. 33. Field II. Chalcolithic pottery: (1–11) Feature 18 (Area II/B3); (12) Feature 23 (Area II/D).

No.	Vessel	Locus/Basket/Item	Description
1	Bowl	276 /2752/5	Pink clay, small gray grits
2	Bowl	276/2753/2	Very pale brown, red cover, medium gray grits
3	Bowl	276/2753/4	Very pale brown, red cover, small gray grits
4	Bowl	276/2752/7	Very pale brown, red cover, small gray grits
5	Bowl, base	276/2752/9	Pink clay, brown cover, medium gray grits
6	Jar	276/2752/6	Pink clay, red cover, medium gray grits
7	Jar, base	276/2753/6	Very pale brown, medium gray grits
8	Jar	276/2752/8	Very pale brown, few small gray grits
9	Holemouth jar	276/2753/3	Pink clay, light brown cover, medium gray grits
10	Holemouth jar	276/2753/2	Pink clay, red cover
11	Cornet	276/2752/1	Pink clay, red cover, small gray grits
12	Holemouth jar, base	400/4000	Brown clay, gray grits

Jars.— Two types of low-necked jars were found. Jars with large apertures of c. 23 cm in diameter (Fig. 33:6, 7), classified by Commenge-Pellerin (1990) as Type 12, and medium-necked jars with apertures of c. 19 cm in diameter (Fig. 33:8), classified by Garfinkel (1999:241–242) as Type G1.

Holemouth Jars.— The medium-sized to large holemouth jars presented here (Fig. 33:9, 10) correspond to Commenge-Pellerin's (1990) Type 10 and Garfinkel's (1999:237–240) Type F3.

Cornet.— A fragment of the pointed base of a cornet showing traces of red paint is represented in Fig. 33:11 (Commenge-Pellerin 1990: Type 9; Garfinkel 1999:219, Type B1).

Area II/B3-2, Feature 19: Pit

This feature (Plan 10) is characterized by a small, shallow, circular pit located in Sq D3, c. 14 m east of Feature 18. The pit (max. diam. 1.5 m, up to 0.2 m deep) was cut into the *hamra* layer and contained dark gray-brown soil and some small fieldstones (L278). This fill and the topsoil around the pit (L277) included flint artifacts dated to the Chalcolithic period (see below).

Area II/B3-3, Feature 20: Pit

This shallow, circular pit (diam. c. 1.5 m, c. 0.3 m deep; Plan 10) is located c. 10 m northeast of Feature 19 (Sqs D1–2). The pit, excavated into the *hamra* layer, contained dark gray-brown soil (L279), yielding flint artifacts, probably dated to the Chalcolithic period (see below, The Flint Assemblages).

Area II/B4, Feature 21: Pit

A small circular pit (diam. c. 1.3 m, c. 0.5 m deep), located in the southern part of Area II/B, was excavated into the *hamra* layer. It contained small-sized stones (c. 0.10–0.15 × 0.05–0.10 ×

0.05 m) in the upper part (L1281), and dark gray-brown soil in the lower part (L1282), and included flint items in both loci and a basalt stone tool in L1282 (see below, Ground Stone Tools). It is dated tentatively to the Pottery Neolithic period according to the flints found in it (see below, The Flint Assemblages).

AREA II/C

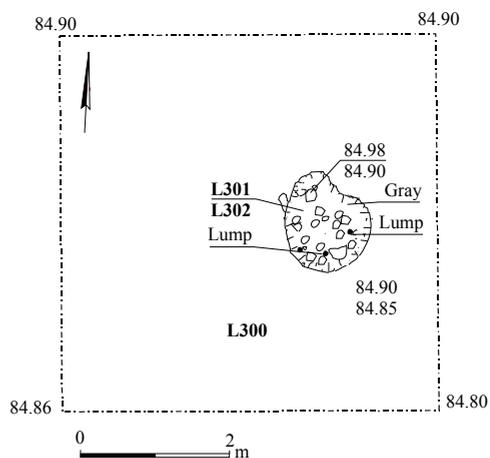
Feature 22

This small, shallow round pit (diam. c. 1.3 m, 0.15 m deep; Plan 11) contained small stones, lumps of *hamra* and some flint artifacts of indeterminate date. Topsoil (L300) surrounded the pit at the top level of L301—an upper layer of fill that covered a layer of soil below (L302).

AREA II/D

Feature 23: Pit

This large pit (diam. c. 3 m) was encountered after a mechanical backhoe cut a section through it; it could not be excavated due to safety restrains. The base of a Chalcolithic holemouth jar (Fig. 33:12) was found within the surviving section. This vessel (diam. c. 10 cm) should be identified as Type 10 according to the typology



Plan 11. Field II, Area II/C, Feature 22.

of Commenge-Pellerin (1990), and Type F1 of Garfinkel's (1999:237–238) typology. A flint sickle blade, probably dated to the Chalcolithic period (see below), was also found.

THE FLINT ASSEMBLAGES

The study of the datable flint artifacts from Tel MaloṬ (East) indicates a PN presence in Field I, and both PN and Chalcolithic horizons in Field II. A sickle blade (Fig. 34) is the only find dated to PPNB, found in Field I. The flint assemblages from the site are discussed according to period, the total of items from each period is considered as an 'assemblage'.

The Pottery Neolithic Period (Field I)

The flint assemblage consists of 298 items (Table 2), mostly waste products. It also contains 54 tools, three of which are identified as cores. Among the waste products, flakes dominate (64%) with blades making up a further 7%. Although the majority of the baskets were sieved, the quantity of chunks and chips recovered was small, likely indicating they were not present in large quantities in the excavated areas.

Almost two-thirds of the tools were made on blades; the remaining examples were fashioned from flakes. A possible explanation is the import of blank blades to the site for final knapping.

However, as waste products of all production stages were found, a local manufacture of most tools must be considered.

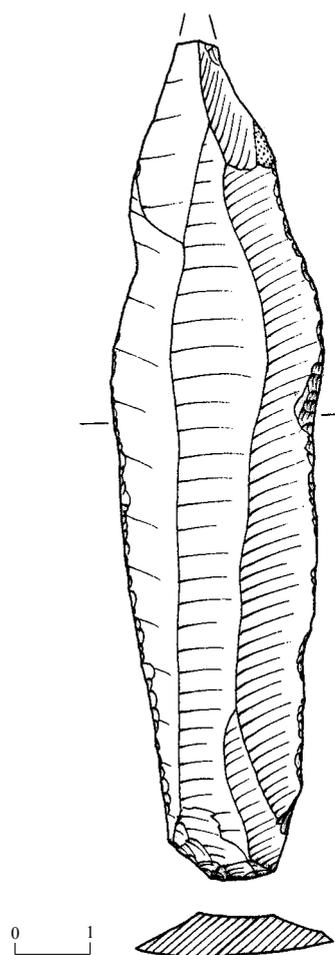


Fig. 34. Field I. PPNB sickle blade.

Table 2. Flint Frequencies of the PN Period (Field I)

Feature Type	F10							F7	F8	F12	Total	
	L135	L144	L150	L151	L160	L161	L162	L404	L418	L430	N	%
Primary Elements		1	6	4	2	5	2	3		1	24	8.0
Flakes	13	17	4	30	1	24	13	29	2	6	139	46.7
Blades		1	1		2	1	3	2			10	3.4
Spalls				2	1	1					4	1.3
Chips			2	2		4		17		1	26	8.7
Chunks		1	4	12	2	5	2	7	1	4	38	12.7
Cores		2	1								3	1.0
Tools	2	9	4	8	1	5	2	17	2	4	54	18.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Several types of raw material were used in the Pottery Neolithic flint assemblage. Most commonly employed was a dark brown Cenonian variety; a small number of tools were fashioned also from a semi-translucent gray-and-brown flint of pebble origin. Gray-and-brown color nodules are available in the region as small pebbles in Naḥal Shaḥam, a tributary of Naḥal Ha-Ela. This flint was used mainly for the production of microliths. Other raw materials, found in limited frequencies, are brecciated brown flint, and flint embedded with microfossils, noted mainly on waste products.

Tools

Fifty-four tools were identified in this assemblage, most of which are 'expedient' ad hoc types (Table 2). The presence of fewer, but formal, diagnostic types allows for chronological assignments.

The tools include three arrowheads: two of the 'Amuq type and one Byblos point. Both 'Amuq points are somewhat long (more than 6 cm in length), their shapes resembling a narrow leaf. They are pressure-flaked mainly on their slightly pronounced pointed tangs and to a limited extent on their bodies. Semi-abrupt retouch appears on the ventral surfaces. The smaller of the two points (Fig. 35:1) displays partial pressure retouch that covers its proximal end, while both sides toward its distal end were shaped on its ventral side by semi-abrupt retouch. The second point is larger and its proximal end was shaped by pressure retouch; its distal end was broken. The Byblos point (Fig. 35:2) has a pointed tang and was fashioned by semi-abrupt retouch. The wings are short and the base is slightly asymmetric in relation to the tang.

All sickle blades in this assemblage were shaped on dark brown flint. Three examples are short segments with one working edge (Fig. 35:3–5), marked by coarse denticulation; their lateral sides are generally characterized by bifacial, pressure retouch. The blades are triangular in section. Their edges are plain, except for one example, which was truncated.

Two blades show evidence of pressure retouch that covers part of the dorsal surface. The last sickle presented (Fig. 35:6) is a fragment of a backed, truncated blade with irregular denticulation on its working edge.

Arrowheads and sickle blades of these types are known in sixth-millennium BCE assemblages in the southern Levant. The Tel Maloṭ examples particularly resemble those found in many Yarmukian assemblages, such as at Sha'ar Ha-Golan (Garfinkel 1993), Munḥata (Gopher 1989) and Jericho (PNB; Crowfoot-Payne 1983). These types are also present in PNA sites on the coastal plain, such as at Nizzanim (Yeivin and Olami 1979), Herzliyya (Prausnitz et al. 1970) and Giv'at Ha-Parsa (Olami, Burian and Friedman 1977).

A specimen identified as a bifacial knife (Fig. 36:2), formed on an elongated, thin tabular flint with cortex covering one side, was found in Field II. Both edges were shaped by bifacial pressure scalene retouch.

The frequency of retouched flakes, notches, denticulates, awls and borers is almost the same (Table 3) in this assemblage; however, retouched blades and scrapers are present only in low frequencies. It is worth noting that only one bifacial in this assemblage is defined as an axe (Fig. 36:1). It has an elliptical, convex-convex cross-section. The dorsal and ventral edges were well shaped by intensive bifacial retouch. The working edge is straight and sharp with pronounced sides of polish on both sides.

The Chalcolithic Period (Field II)

Chalcolithic flints were recovered mainly from Field II, from Features 16, 17 and 21 (Table 3). The raw material used for this assemblage is similar to that of the Neolithic assemblage, and likely derives from the same source. The distribution of raw materials related to various features is similar, with almost all the artifacts collected from the shallow pits. This may be the result of knapping activity with waste disposed of in those locales.

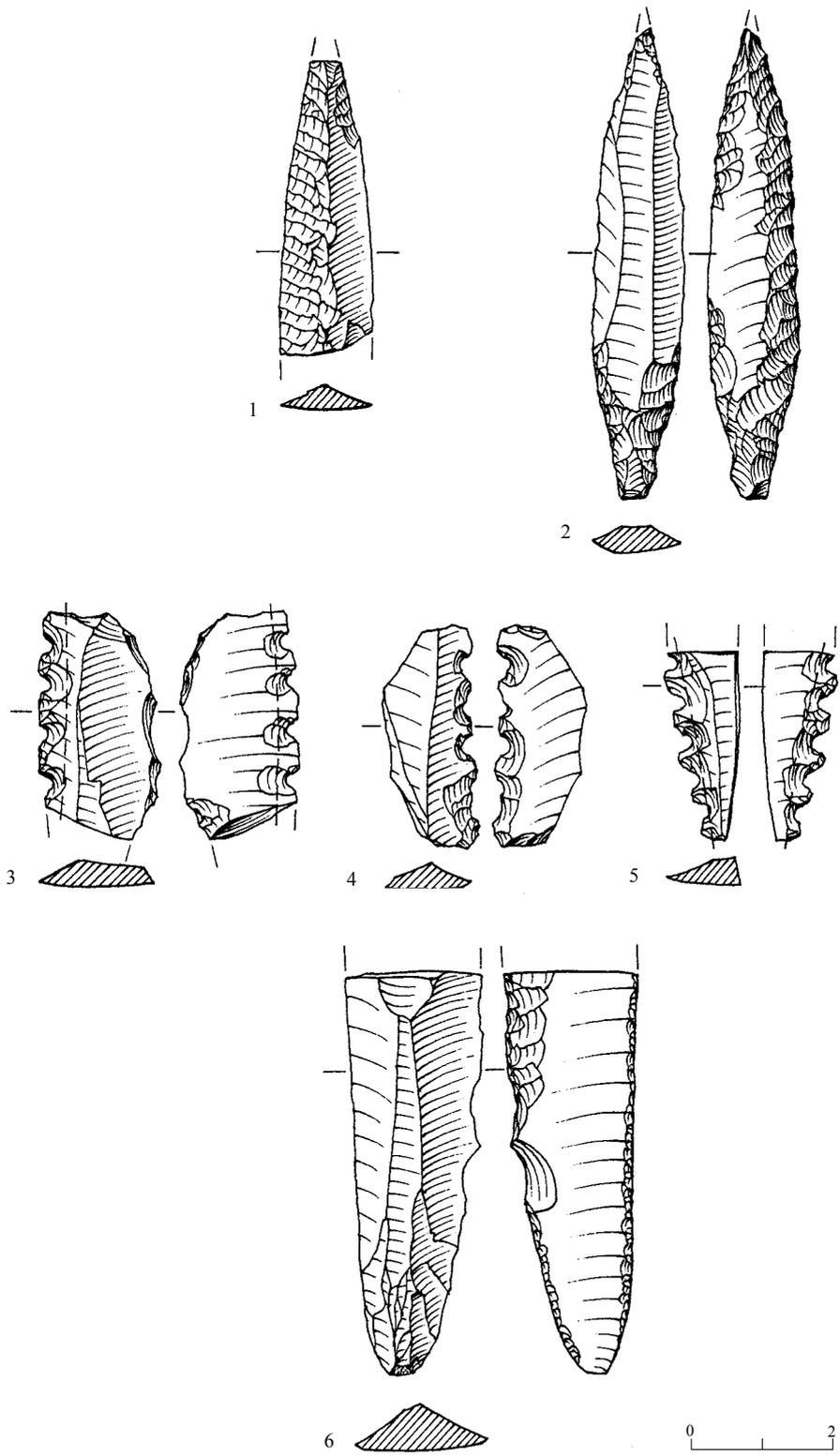


Fig. 35. Field I. Flint items of the PN period: (1, 2) arrowheads; (3-6) sickle blades.

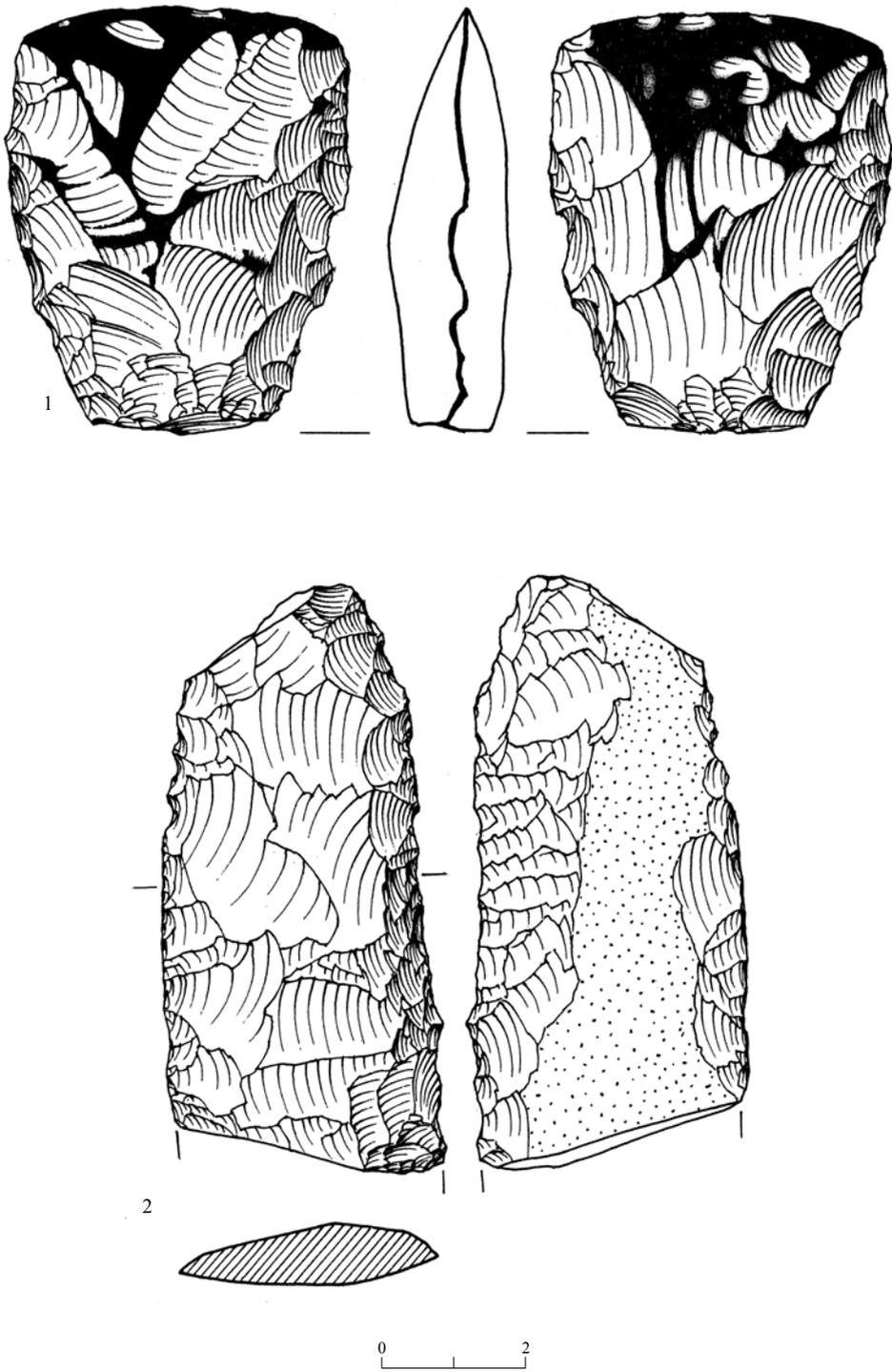


Fig. 36. Field I. Flint items of the PN period: (1) axe; (2) bifacial knife.

Table 3. Flint Frequencies of the Chalcolithic Period (Field II)

Feature Type	F15	F16	17	F18–20	F21	F22	F23	Total	
								N	%
Primary Elements	2	3	8	5	2	1		21	7.2
Flakes	5	81	21	11	7	1	1	127	43.8
Blades	1	9	1		1	1		13	4.5
Spalls			1					1	0.3
Chips	4	30	2	4	4			44	15.2
Chunks	3	21	14	7	1			46	15.9
Cores			5	2				7	2.4
Tools	3	11	7	8	1		1	31	10.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>290</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 4. Flint-Tool Frequencies from Fields I and II

Feature Type	I	II	Total	
	N	N	N	%
Arrowheads	3	-	3	3.5
Sickle blades	6	2	8	9.4
Bifacials	1	2	3	3.5
Burins	3	2	5	5.9
Scrapers	6	4	10	11.8
Notches and Denticulates	7	4	11	12.9
Awls and Borers	11	3	14	16.5
Retouched Blades	4	4	8	9.4
Retouched Flakes	12	9	21	24.7
Knives	-	1	1	1.2
Varia	1	-	1	1.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Five out of the seven cores recovered in this assemblage are small and were used to produce flakes. By contrast, the other two, partially exploited, were for blade and/or bladelet blanks. This is reflected in the flake to blade ratio, where flakes dominate the waste material.

Tools

Two sickle blades on bladelets (Table 4; Fig. 37:1), fashioned on local Senonian flint, are

backed, truncated and have finely denticulated working edges. The tool assemblage also includes one bifacial, probably an adze (Fig. 37:2) with straight sides and a plano-convex section. Its working edge is broken.

Scrapers were generally produced on flakes; however, Fig. 37:3 was produced on thin tabular flint and is probably a fan scraper. Retouched flakes, representing approximately one-third of this group, were simply modified by partial fine retouch along one edge, and are the most common tool-type at the site, followed by notches, which represent one-quarter of all ad hoc tools.

GROUND STONE TOOLS

Several basalt objects were found both in Fields I and II. Unfortunately, their findspots did not aid in attributing their chrono-cultural contexts. Therefore, the dating is based, when possible, upon typological considerations.

Upper Grinding Stones

These objects have been classified according to the typology we identified in previous excavations (Milevski 1998; forthcoming). Objects in this assemblage include two fragments of upper grinding stones of vesicular basalt from Areas I/A and I/B. They are of a

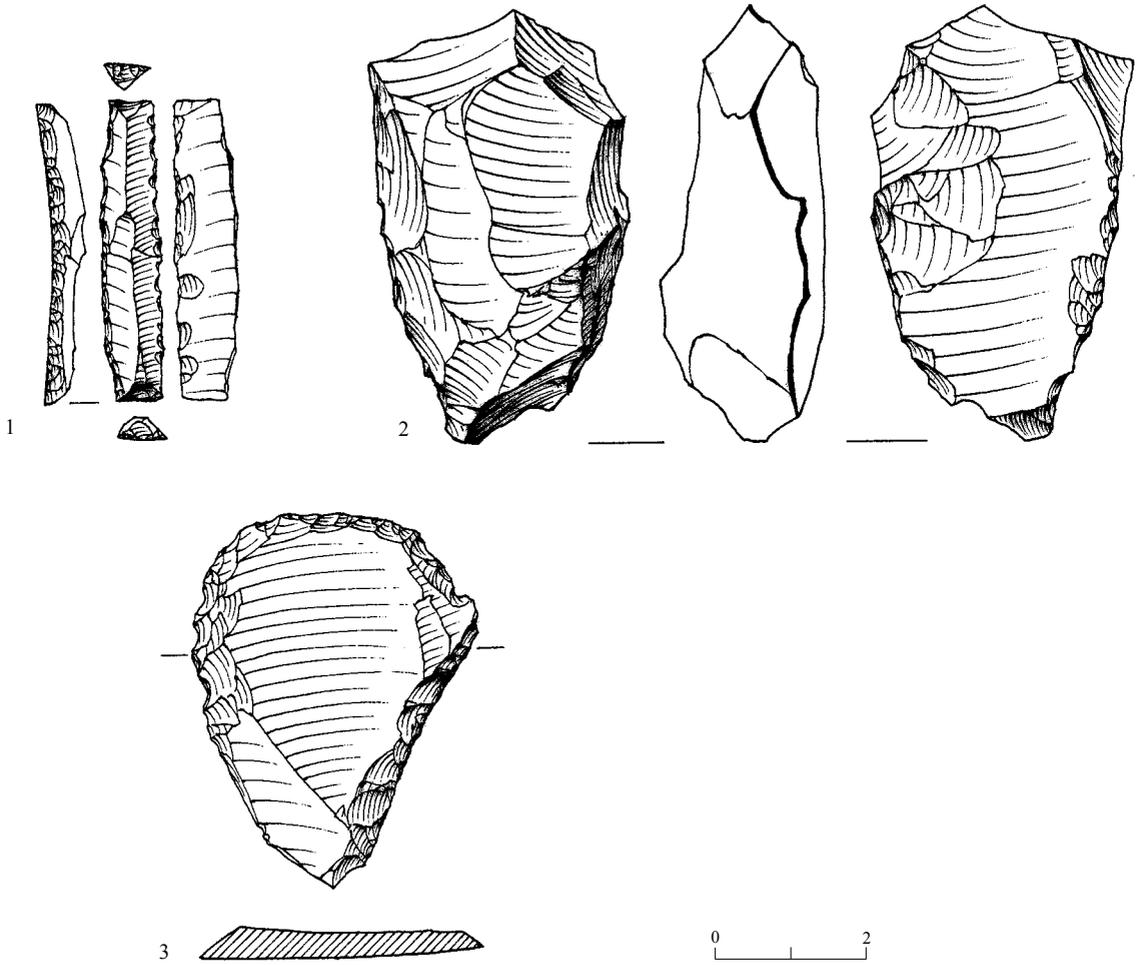


Fig. 37. Field II. Flint items of the Chalcolithic period: (1) sickle blade; (2) adze; (3) scraper.

semi-cylindrical subtype with two opposing work surfaces. One (Fig. 38:1) has a slightly convex working surface, showing evidence of polishing. The second fragment (Fig. 38:2) has one convex working surface and a second flat working surface, both of which exhibit evidence of polishing. Unfortunately, neither tool comes from a clear chrono-cultural context and they cannot be assigned to any specific occupation or period; however, based on the proximity of Features 4 and 5 to their findspots, it is possible that they belong to the Middle and Late Bronze Age horizons.

Polished Axe

Figure 38:3 is a highly polished, symmetrically ellipsoidal, round-edged axe of fine-grained basalt. Such axes, of basalt or other materials, are thought to be votive, and are known from PN contexts in the Levant, such as at Ras Shamra (de Contenson 1992: Fig. 139, Pls. CII; CIV:8; CV:1), Beisamoun (Perrot 1952; Lechevallier 1978: Figs. 29:1; 30:4, 98), Abu Ghosh (Gopher 1993; Khalaily and Marder 2003) and Beidha (Kirkbride 1966: Fig. 10:1–8).

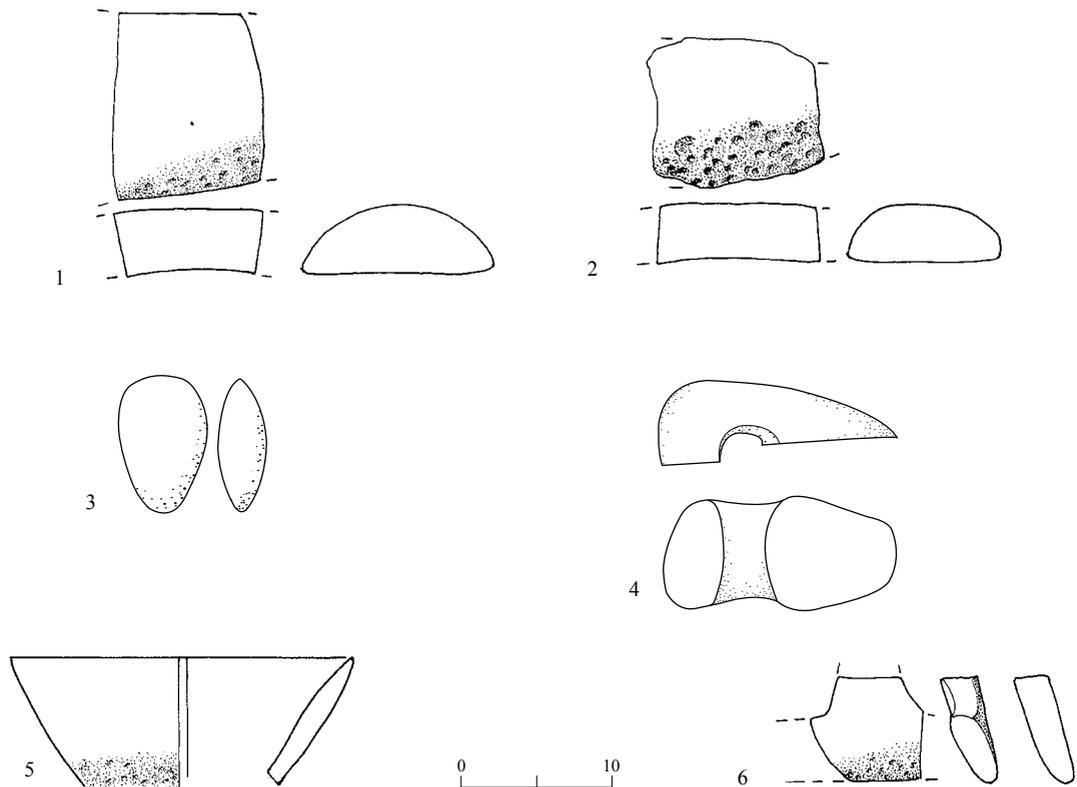


Fig. 38. Basalt tools and vessels: (1, 2) upper grinding stones; (3) axe; (4) pierced tool; (5, 6) bowls.

Pierced Tool

This medium-sized, elliptical object of fine-grained basalt (Fig. 38:4), centrally pierced by biconical drilling, was found in Feature 20. It was broken longitudinally in the center, and only one half was recovered. One edge seems to have been sharpened, while the opposite edge was flattened and polished; the latter bears a vertical groove (not visible in the drawing).

The function of the tool is unclear, but it appears to have had a sharpened edge used for cutting, probably in the manner of a pick. If utilized as such, it may have been hafted on a stick. Alternately, it could also have been used as a weight for a digging stick. A similar tool was found at Munḥata (Gopher and Orrelle 1995: Fig. 34:8, Pl. I:2), where it was assigned to Level 1, dated to EB I, but containing a Chalcolithic admixture. Although this object was found with flints dated to the PN period,

a Chalcolithic date is suggested on the basis of closest parallels deriving from sites of that period in the Golan (Epstein 1998:236, Pls. XLII:1, 3, 5–7).

Bowls

Two fragments of fine-grained bowls were found in Field I, Area I/B. Both are dated to the Chalcolithic period on the basis of their morphology. The object illustrated in Fig. 38:5 is a body fragment of a “V-shaped” bowl with a tapered rim and a very smooth inner surface. Unfortunately, the base was not preserved and classification is uncertain. This might be an example of Rowan’s (1998:163–183) Subtype 4Ci-ii, a variant of a fenestrated bowl known from sites such as Newe Ur (Perrot, Reich and Tzori 1967: Fig. 13.1), Shoham and Peqi’in (Rowan 1998:178, 182). Alternately, if it had had a flat, rather than a fenestrated base, it

would have been classified as Rowan's (1998) Type 3B. Bowls of that shape have been found at Gerar (Gilead 1995: Fig. 7.1:3, 5), Bir Şafadi and Abu Maţar (Braun 1990: Fig. 2:1, 2). A base fragment of a second bowl (Fig. 38:6) is classified as Rowan's (1998:163–183) Subtype 4Ci-ii, a variant of another type of fenestrated bowl.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The earliest occupation at Tel Maloţ (East) is dated to early PN or PNA, although a PPNB artifact was also found at the site (Fig. 34). The remains of the PN horizon appear in a layer resting above the sandy, sterile soil in Field I, Area I/A, and in pits dispersed across Field I, Area I/B and Field II, Area II/B. The nature of the excavated features should probably be interpreted as the periphery of a settlement that is likely located in the center of, or very close to, the tell. Animal remains (see Kehati, this volume) of caprovines and cattle are consistent with the period; however, the assemblage was too meager to further address the subject.

Pottery Neolithic sites, dated to the early part of this horizon and bearing the same material culture attributes, are known in the coastal plain at Ziqim (Noy 1977; Garfinkel et al. 2002), Giv'at Ha-Parsa (Olami, Burian and Friedman 1977) and Lod (Kaplan 1977; Khalaily and Gopher 1999; Yannai and Marder 2000). Recently, similar features were excavated at Qidron/Hafez Hayyim (Rosenberg and van den Brink 2005).

Several pits in Field II contained pottery and flint artifacts of the Chalcolithic period. These features, as well as the basalt tools and vessels (including those found in Field I), may relate to occupation layers found in Area E of the Weksler-Bdolah excavations (Weksler-Bdolah and Golani 2000:71*). The ceramic repertoire, as well as the flints and the basalt objects, are typical of the Ghassulian culture (late fifth to early fourth millennium BCE).

It appears that the excavated area southeast of the tell was not occupied for c. 1600 years, until

sometime in MB II. The evidence recovered in this excavation suggests that during that period, and possibly through LB I,⁷ the area served for agricultural and industrial activities.⁸ The close proximity to the springs and the high water table in this environment were probably the reason for the construction of the kiln (Feature 5). The well (Feature 4) most likely provided water for the residing population, the pottery industry and possibly, to irrigate fields during almost 500 years. Such continuity of water systems and devices from MB II to the Late Bronze Age have been suggested in the past by Tzuk (1990).

In general, kilns are found beyond the limits of populated areas; therefore, the location of a kiln at Tel Maloţ (East)—below the tell—is characteristic of this practice. Petrographic analysis conducted on Middle Bronze Age potsherds from the kiln (see Cohen-Weinberger, this volume) indicates that aside from expected local *hamra* clays, basalt fragments of tuffic origin were found in the pottery. As an exposure of this type of basalt is found near Yesodot, there is a high probability that it was the source of this element in the pottery, indicating the local nature of ceramic production at Tel Maloţ (East).

Feature 13 may represent the sole remains dated to the Iron Age unearthed in the current excavations, albeit, as noted above, the dating of the feature is problematic. While structural remains could not be related to the Persian period, the presence of pottery, mainly from the end of this period, could suggest a contemporary occupation level on the tell.

The Hellenistic winepress (Feature 15) indicates agricultural use of this area near the tell, exposing activity in a period hitherto unknown at the site. The winepress could suggest that a farming community existed at Tel Maloţ. Such a community would be within the framework of a major Hellenistic growth in settlement in the triangle formed between Bet Shemesh, Ashdod and Gezer. The discovery of Late Roman pottery and coins (even if they remained in circulation during the Byzantine occupation of the site), may point to occupation during these times as well.

The Byzantine period is the best represented period in the area, southeast of the tell and probably on the tell itself. A continuity in occupation of almost 300 years existed in the southeastern part of the site. If the diverse phases in Features 1 to 3 are taken into account, three different phases corresponding to the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries CE are represented, with the last phase actually continuing on into the Umayyad period.

The winepress in Feature 2, a regional southern subtype found also at Rehovot and Ashqelon, is noteworthy. From an architectural point of view, it represents a type more complex than the Hellenistic winepress of Feature 15. However, Feature 2 was constructed using the same basic building techniques. This press indicates that the region of Tel MaloṬ was a wine-producing area, one surely dependent upon the special geomorphological conditions associated with the *ḥamra* layer. Other types of winepresses from the Byzantine period are known from the area (Kloner 2006). Grapes are still grown today in the fields around the tell.

The best represented phase within the Byzantine period seems to be the sixth century CE as seen in Features 1, 2 and 3. It appears that in this period the site extended well beyond the borders of the tell, to the southeast.

From the seventh century through the ninth-tenth centuries CE, the Abbasid period, the area

seems to have been used, as in the PN period, for burial.

In summary, it may be stated that different types of archaeological remains were found dispersed over the landscape east of Tel MaloṬ. They represent agricultural, industrial and burial activities. In a few instances, superimposed stratigraphic units were discerned. This archaeological picture discovered at Tel MaloṬ (East) seems to be characteristic of areas adjacent to urban centers.

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NOTES

¹ The excavation (Pemit No. A-3641) was conducted by Giora Parnos on behalf of the IAA during the months of June and July 2002. Deborah Sklar-Parnes and Orit Segal participated as field supervisors. The authors are grateful to them and the following colleagues for their participation in the excavation: Ra'id Abu Khalef and Yehezkiel Lavie (administrators); Vadim Essman, Avraham Hajian, Viatcheslav Pirskey, and Tania Kornfeld (surveyors),

Leticia Barda (plans) and Tsila Sagiv (photographer). Workers from governmental Project 500 came from Rahat and Ashqelon. The excavation was financed by Israel Railways.

² Field I is located near the areas excavated by Wexler-Bdolah and Golani (2000) and Lalkin (Kindler 2000).

³ The excavation (Pemit No. A-3585) was conducted on behalf of the IAA during January–February

2002. Thanks are due to the following colleagues that participated in the excavation of this field: Avraham Hajian (surveying) and Ra'id Abu Khalef (administration). Project 500 workers were from Qiryat Gat. The excavation was financed by Olitsky Engineering.

⁴ Orit Segal was in charge of the soundings by mechanical means that unearthed evidence of archaeological remains, eventually leading to the excavation.

⁵ The coins were identified by Donald T. Ariel.

⁶ Diego Barkan of the IAA Central district supervised mechanical removal of that layer, discovering archaeological remains that prompted this salvage project.

⁷ A cemetery dating to the Late Bronze Age was excavated by Sigal Golan (forthcoming) north of the tell.

⁸ A second winepress was discovered near Feature 15 after the excavations had ceased. Unfortunately, it was destroyed by mechanical tools and no dating of it was possible. The excavators were notified of this discovery after it had been destroyed.

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