Kabazi II, Unit V, Lower Levels: Lithics from the Pocket

Jürgen Richter

Victor Chabai, Jürgen Richter, Thorsten Uthmeier (eds.), Kabazi II: Last Interglacial Occupation, Environment and Subsistence. Palaeolithic Sites of Crimea, Volume 1, Simferopol - Cologne, 181-190

2005

Universität zu Köln
Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte
Weyertal 125
50923 Köln
www.ufg.uni-koeln.de

Chapter
10

Kabazi II, Unit V, Lower Levels: Lithics from the Pocket

Jürgen Richter

Level V/4: Mixed Equilibrium and Primary Butchering

The small assemblage contains only 40 artefacts, 27 of which can be attributed to 5 raw material units (plus an unclassified unit RMU 6; - note: unit RMU 3 has been omitted). Most of the artefacts were recovered from the north-western part of the excavated area (Fig. 10-1). Compared with small assemblage size, three of the workpieces were quite large (Fig. 10-2). Raw material procurement would appear to have been quite random (Fig. 10-3; 10-4).

Raw material unit imported and discarded as a single object (1)

Only one fragment of a large flake with some retouch on the lower face was introduced as a single object and then discarded (Fig. 10-5, RMU 7).

Workpiece used as a single object, but modified on-site (1)

A large bifacial tool or a partially decorticated preform was brought in to be broken into three parts. One fragment was discarded, the other two fragments were transformed into bifacial tools, one leaf-shaped scraper and one bifacial knife. Both were used, repeatedly retouched and discarded (Fig. 10-5, RMU 1). Thus, RMU 1 was completely consumed on site, and within a very small area of less than one square metre (Fig. 10-1, squares Λ6-Λ7 and K6-K7).

Workpieces imported as raw nodules (1)

One raw material unit (Fig. 10-5, RMU 2) displays a complete transformational sequence. A thick slab was imported and formatted by breakage. Whilst one of the chunks was discarded, the other was used to produce a preform, as is indicated by some cortical flakes. The preform received some surface shaping (as a bifacial tool) and some retouch to its edges, probably during on-site use. The bifacial tool was exported from the site.

Workpieces imported as cores (2)

A preform (or a large bifacial tool?) was introduced and received some surface shaping, probably because some flakes were needed for cutting (Fig. 10-5, RMU 5). The flakes were used and discarded. As the basal parts of these flakes show no traces of any edge retouch, it is more likely that they were taken from an (unretouched) bifacial preform rather than from a finished bifacial tool. The preform was exported from the site.

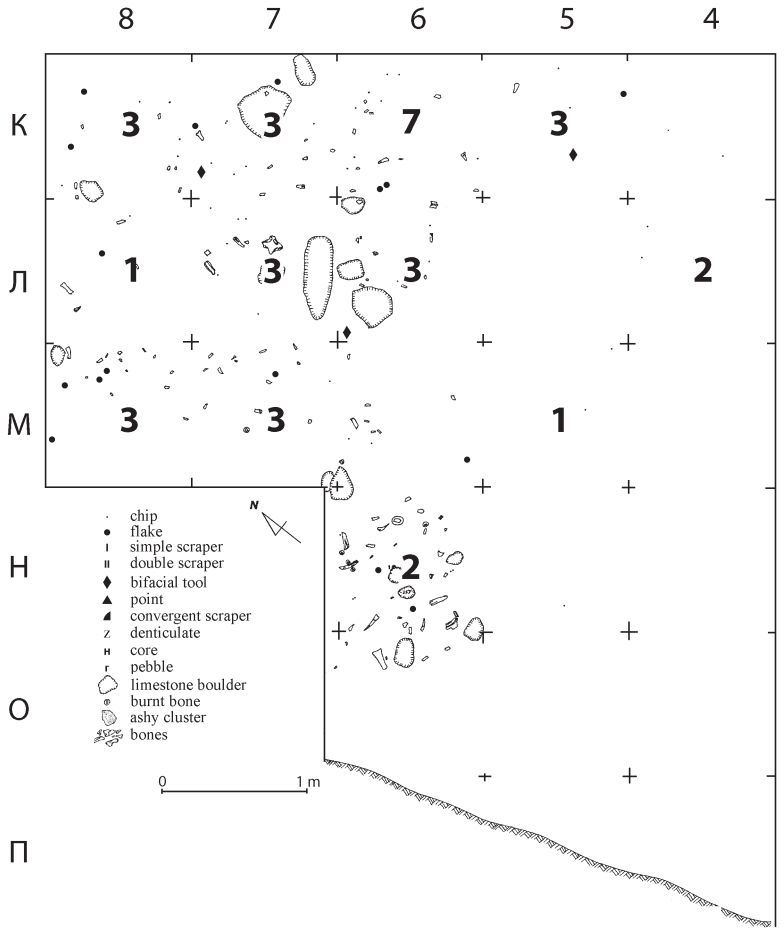

Fig. 10-1 Kabazi II, level V/4: artefact distribution (pieces > 2cm).

A core was brought into the site (Fig. 10-5, RMU 4). Some chips indicate preparation of a striking platform. A preferential flake was taken from the core, used for cutting (?) and discarded. Afterwards, the exploitation surface was rejuvenated by an *éclat debordant* which was discarded. The core was then exported. Both examples of this class show "migrating cores". In the first case, the bifacial preform is regarded as being equivalent of a core.

Conclusion: equilibrium of functions

The level V/4 assemblage indicates one (or more?) short stay(s), probably for primary butchering, within a circulating land-use pattern consisting of very similar, short stays. Raw material units focused on consumption (RMU 1, RMU 7, RMU 2), on exportation (RMU 4, RMU 5) and on production (RMU 2) display an equilibrium of functions which neither decreased nor enlarged the lithic budget of the small human group.

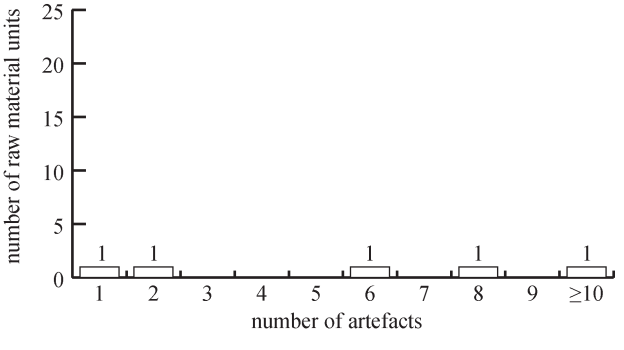

Fig. 10-2 Kabazi II, level V/4: number of artefacts per workpiece.

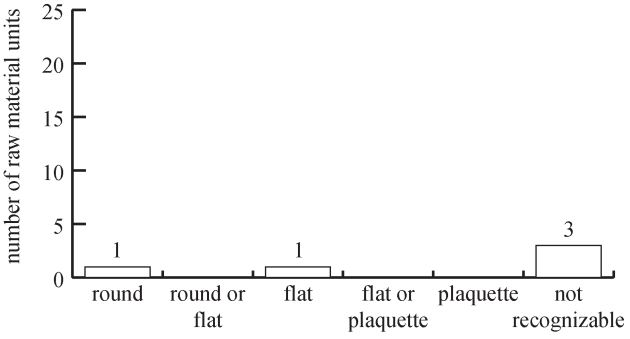

Fig. 10-3 Kabazi II, level V/4: shapes of nodules.

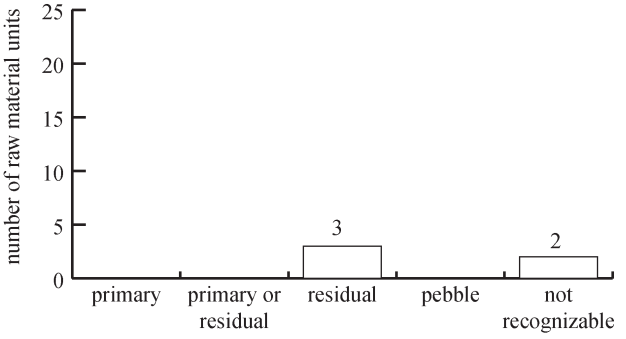

Fig. 10-4 Kabazi II, level V/4: nature of raw materials.

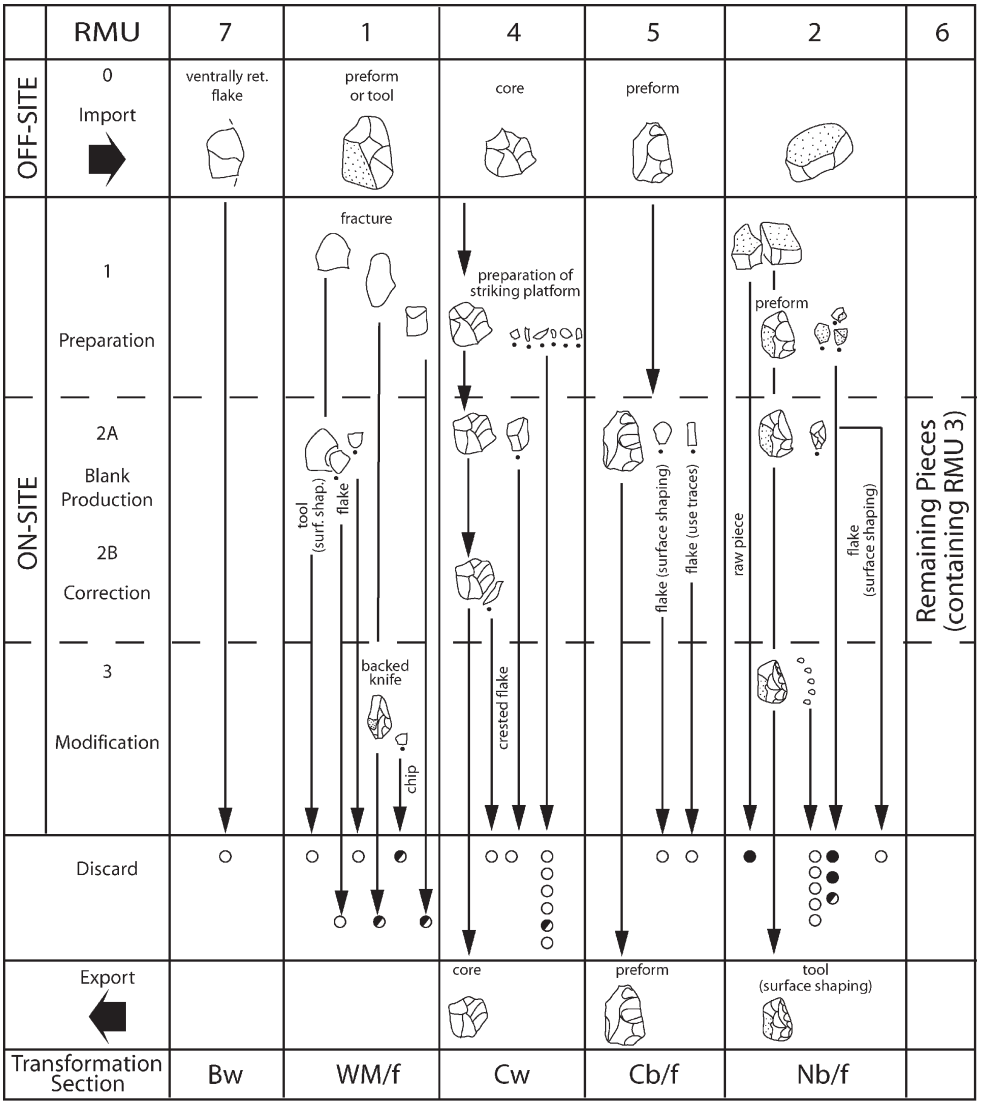

Fig. 10-5 Kabazi II, level V/4: transformation sections of workpieces. Bw = blank without debitage or modification; TM = formal tool with debris of modification; Cw = core without debitage; Cb = blank production from a core; Nb = blank production from a raw nodule; /f = bifacial production or surface shaping (steps of the formal *chaîne opératoire* after Geneste 1985; 1988; 1990).

Level V/5: Only Consumption

The assemblage consists of 11 raw material units (plus one unclassified unit of burnt pieces and one unclassified unit of patinated pieces). A number of 69 artefacts was recovered from this level (Fig. 10-6), 22 of them classified by raw material (Fig. 10-7, 10-8), raw material procurement being quite random (Fig. 10-9).

Raw material units imported and discarded as single flake or tool (3)

Two flakes appear to have been imported as single objects (Fig. 10-10, RMU 2, RMU 8), one of them is however debatable, it being a cortex flake with no sharp edges. On the other hand, the other might have been imported for cutting activities. One side-scraper was brought in, either as a fragment which was then used and discarded, or as a whole piece which broke during use, one piece to be discarded, the other to be exported (RMU 13).

Workpieces imported as single flake/tool, but modified on-site (3)

A double side-scraper was brought to the site and experienced heavy usage leading to a fracture of the distal part into several pieces. These pieces were all discarded (Fig. 10-10, RMU 10), although some fragments are still unaccounted for. A bifacial scraper was brought in, used, rejuvenated and discarded (RMU 12). A large bifacial point was broken and the tip discarded (RMU 9). The basal part was resharpened for export.

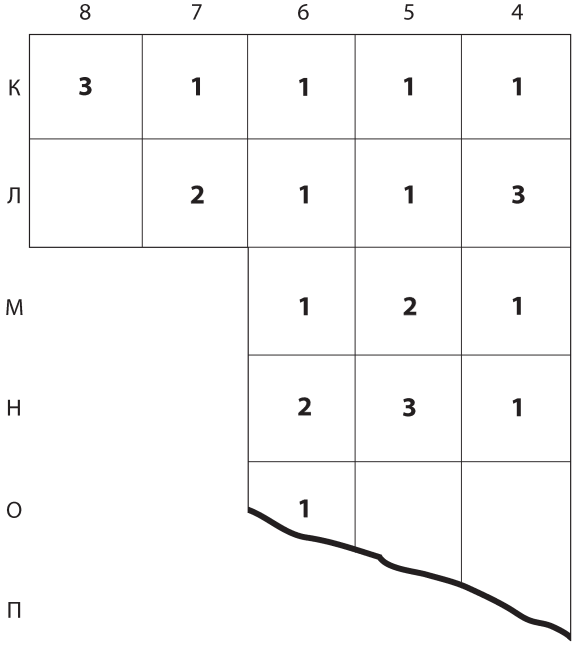

Fig. 10-6 Kabazi II, level V/5: artefact distribution (pieces > 2cm).

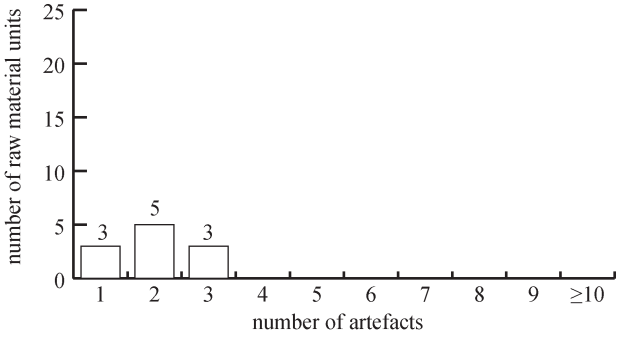

Fig. 10-7 Kabazi II, level V/5: number of artefacts per workpiece.

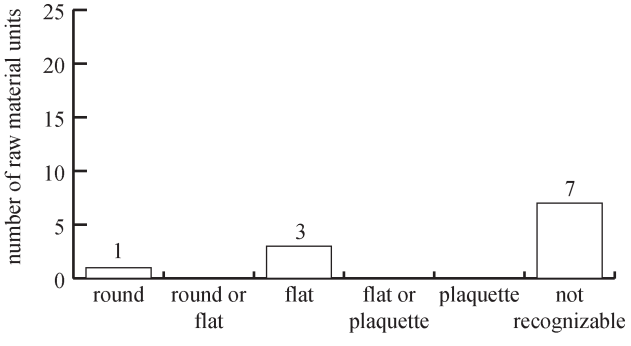

Fig. 10-8 Kabazi II, level V/5: shapes of nodules.

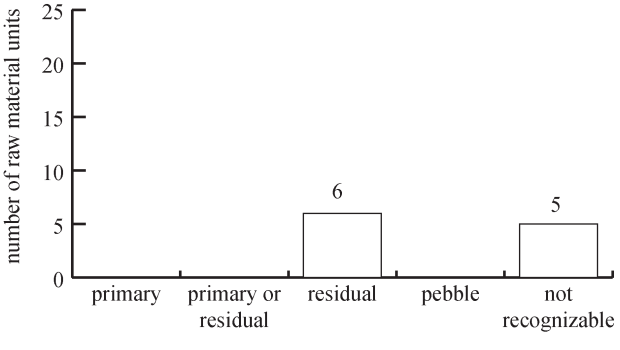

Fig. 10-9 Kabazi II, level V/5: nature of raw materials.

Workpieces imported as raw nodules (3)

A large flint slab was collected, decorticated and transformed into a preform which was immediately discarded (Fig. 10-10, RMU 11) together with a number of cortex flakes. Additional flakes must have been exported. From a similar slab (RMU 6), a preform was produced to be exported. One of the larger decortication flakes was secondarily transformed into a small bifacial tool which was used and discarded on the site.

A small nodule (RMU 3) was decorticated to form a core in order to produce flakes which were immediately used and discarded. The core was removed from the site.

Workpieces imported as cores (2)

Two bifacial tools or preforms were imported, and a number of flakes removed from them. The resulting tools/preforms were again exported (Fig. 10-10, RMU 1, RMU 4). Both pieces have to be regarded as being equivalent of "migrating cores", kept in someone's pocket for occasional flake production.

Conclusion: butchering of a single *Equus hydruntinus?*

The assemblage is characteristic of many small activities. These would appear to have been mostly carried out by work pieces imported from earlier short stays elsewhere. These included either single tools

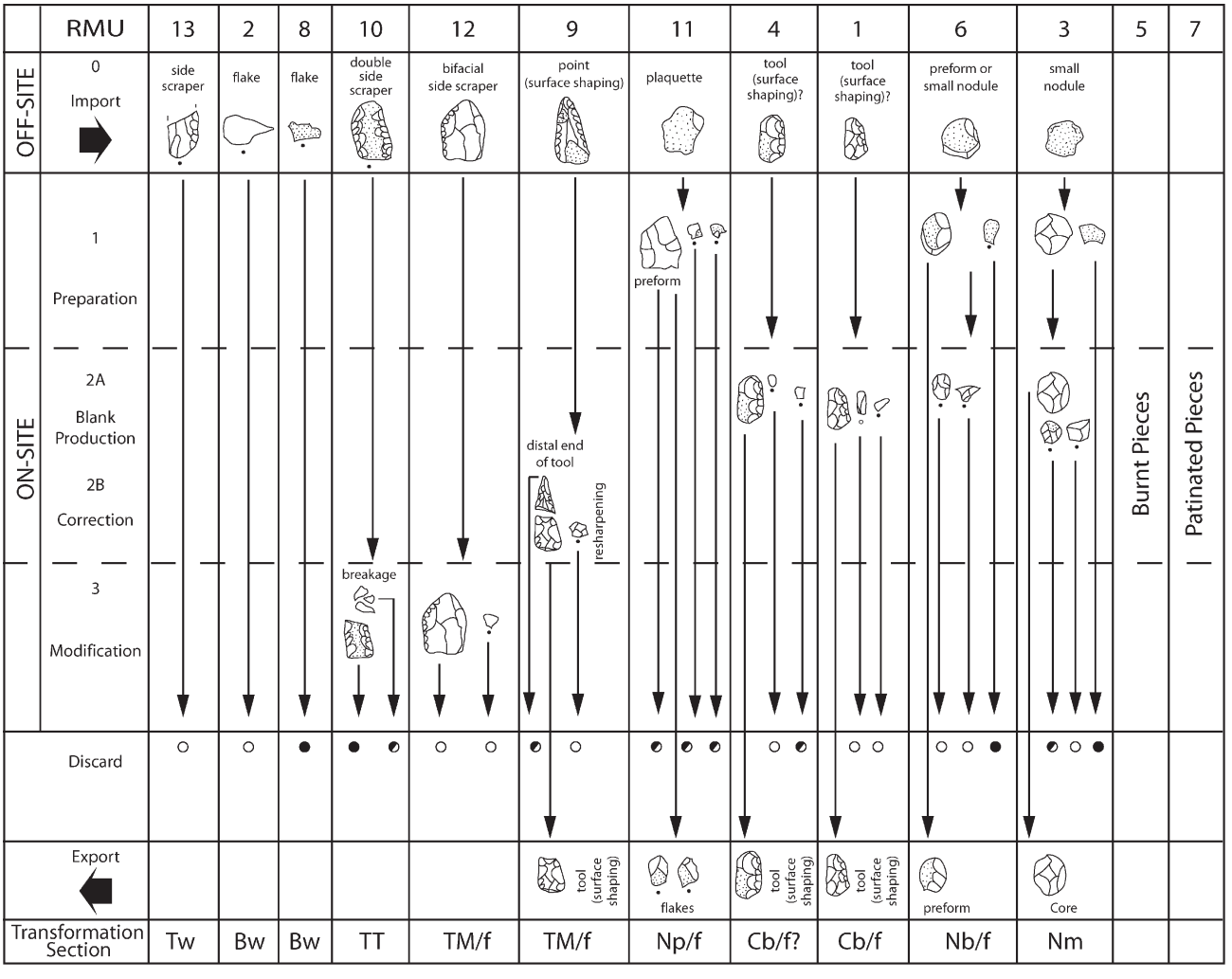

Fig. 10-10 Kabazi II, level V/5: transformation sections of workpieces. Bw = blank without debitage or modification; Tw = tool without debitage or modification; TT = fragments of a formal tool, used as a single object; Np = preparation of a raw nodule; Cb = blank production from a core; Nb = blank production from a raw nodule; Cm = blank production from a core with modification of blanks; Nm = blank production from a nodule with modification of blanks; /f = bifacial production or surface shaping (steps of the formal chaîne opératoire after Geneste 1985; 1988; 1990).

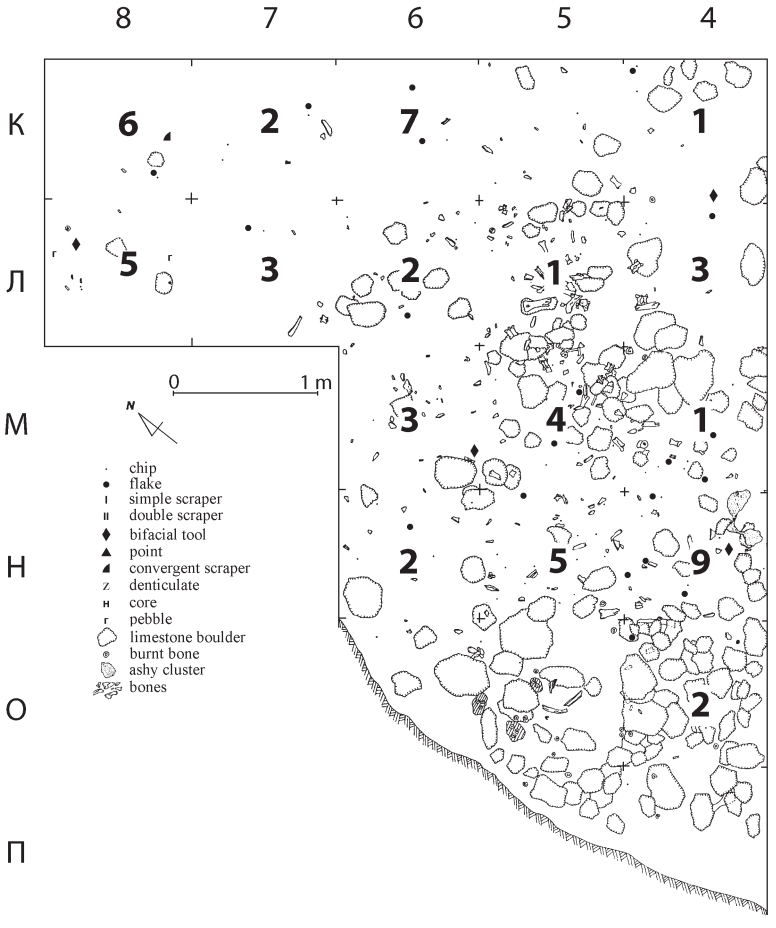

Fig. 10-11 Kabazi II, level V/6: artefact distribution (pieces > 2cm).

or blanks, or very small raw material pieces (obviously "from someone's pocket"). Scrapers represent the most often consumed tool type. The assemblage is suggestive of a site function connected with one short stay within a circulating land-use pattern. The occupation saw the final stage (6 out of 11 cases) or the intermediate stage (3 out of 11) of the transformational biographies of individual workpieces. The production events which have been identified (RMU 3, RMU 6, RMU 11) are of limited scale and were devoted exclusively to the demands encountered at the site. No later demand was anticipated for future visits to other sites. Production for export is totally lacking. By contrast, the assemblage reflects a decrease in the lithic budget at the peoples' disposal, in favour of extraction or maintenance activities. Might this assemblage represent butchering and hide preparation (scrapers!) of a single *Equus hydruntinus*?

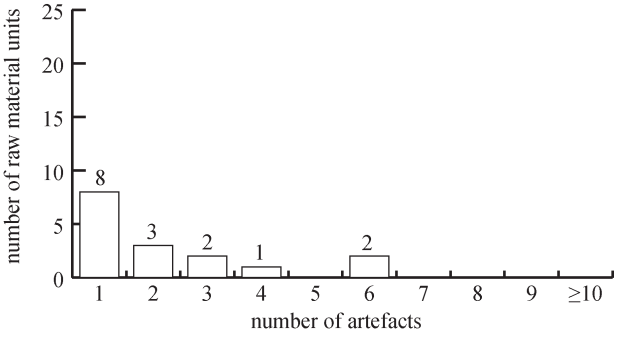

Fig. 10-12 Kabazi II, level V/6: number of artefacts per workpiece.

Level V/6: "Pocket" Tools and Cores

Level V/6 (Fig. 10-11) yielded 103 artefacts, of which 36 are attributable to individual raw material units. The assemblage contains a total 16 raw material units. The units RMU 11, RMU 12, RMU 13 and RMU 16 have been omitted, these being single objects which turned out to be not clearly distinguishable from the other classified groups. Unit RMU 17 contains unclassified pieces only. The number of artefacts per unit is generally very low (Fig. 10-12), raw material procurement, however, being not always incidental, sometimes focused on flat nodules from primary sources (Fig. 10-13, 10-14).

Raw material units imported and discarded as single objects (5)

The imported single tools and blanks fulfilled scraping (Fig. 10-15, RMU 18, RMU 20, RMU 21) as well as cutting functions (Fig. 10-15, RMU 10, RMU 14). One of the scrapers received an additional, burin-like treatment (Fig. 10-16, *11*).

Raw material unit imported as single object, but modified on-site (1)

One bifacial point was brought in, used and resharpened by a lateral sharpening spall ("Prondnik spall"), this resulted in the production of the exported tool (Fig. 10-15, RMU 19; see also Fig. 10-16, *10*).

Workpieces imported as raw nodules (1)

A thick cortical flake was, as an exception to the rule, classified within the "Preparation of a nodule" category, as it is improbable that it was imported as a single flake. It is more likely that a nodule was initially corticated and only then exported (Fig. 10-15, RMU 15).

Workpieces imported as cores (9)

A preform (Fig. 10-15, RMU 22) was brought in and immediately discarded, probably because of a problem in the distal part of the piece (Fig. 10-16, *12*). All the other raw material units of the assemblage also belong to this class. In all these cases, cores had been imported, some flakes had been removed (Fig. 10-16, *1-9*), and the cores exported. Thus, the assemblage attests for eight "migrating cores", one of them being a bifacial preform, in this case used as an equivalent of a core (RMU 5).

Conclusion: an executive inventory

The level 6 assemblage is indicative of short-term consumption during one stay within a circulating land-use pattern. All larger raw material units are represented within an intermediate stage of their biography as transformational sequences, and the smaller units and single objects within a final stage. There are no clues as to the nature of raw material procurement or to the planned production for future demands. With the exception of RMU 15, a nodule which was not used, no raw nodules were brought to the site. In this respect, the assemblage is of a unique character. The activities on the site, at the time of level 6, were all results of earlier planning. The whole lithic assemblage might even derive from the "pockets" of the occupants. The assemblage may be labelled as an "executive inventory" without any additional investment for future activities. The lithic budget is decreased.

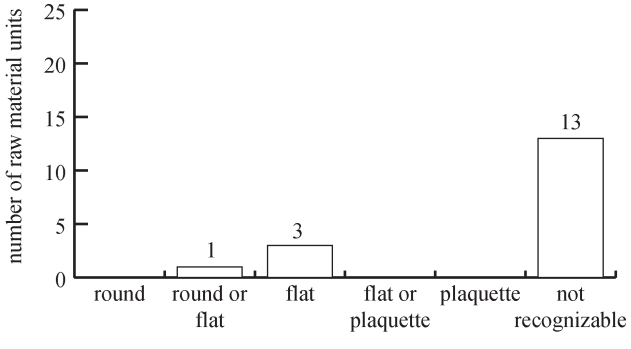

Fig. 10-13 Kabazi II, level V/6: shapes of nodules.

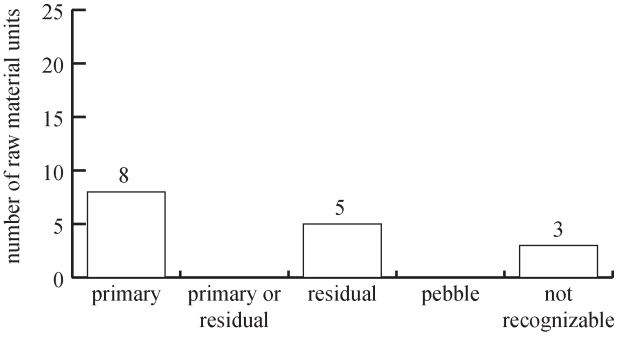

Fig. 10-14 Kabazi II, level V/6: nature of raw materials.

Results:
Transformational Processes as Documented in the Lower Levels of Unit V

The lower levels of unit V delivered very small assemblages documenting very short occupations within a circular land use pattern without much planning for future demands. Consumption of lithics dominated over production. On the other hand, much of the lithic material came from the pockets of the people who were always prepared for certain activities and for the specific demand of tools connected with it. Thus, planning was not missing entirely, but, instead of anticipating a particular situation of demand, it aimed at random and unpredictable demands. A minimum of cores and tools was kept available for a whole range of different purposes. Although nodules were not acquired, with some exceptions in level V/6, from particular primary sources of raw materials, procurement was embedded in the general mobility pattern of the group. The unit V/4-6 occupations did not add much to the lithic budget of the group, and consumption was at the expense of earlier procurement.

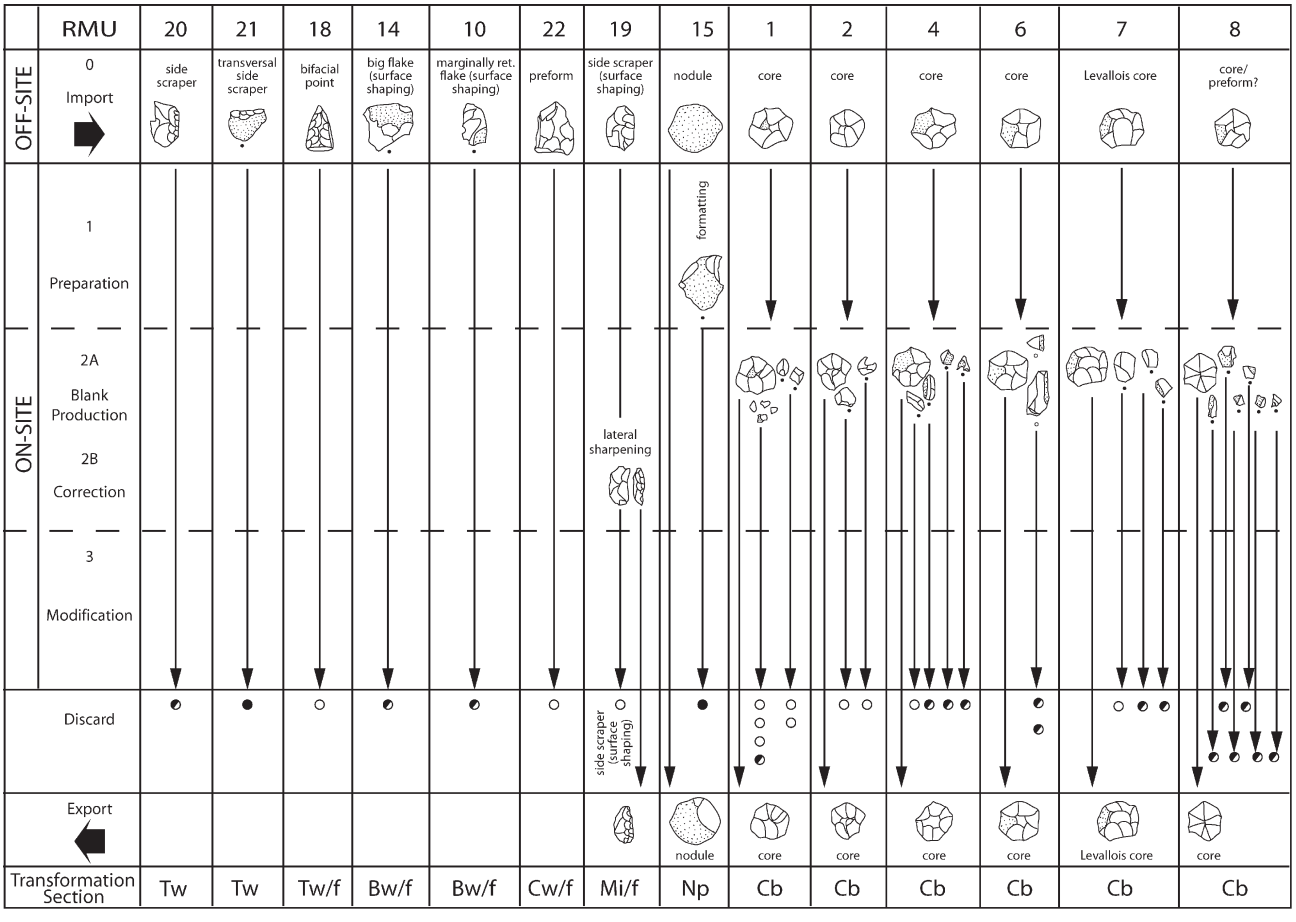

Fig. 10-15 Kabazi II, level V/6: transformation sections of workpieces. Bw = blank without debitage or modification; Tw = tool without debitage or modification; Cw = core without debitage; Mi = modification debris of a blank or tool, used as a single object; Np = preparation of a raw nodule; Cb = blank production from a core; Cm = blank production from a core with modification of blanks; /f = bifacial production or surface shaping (steps of the formal *chaîne opératoire* after Geneste 1985; 1988; 1990).

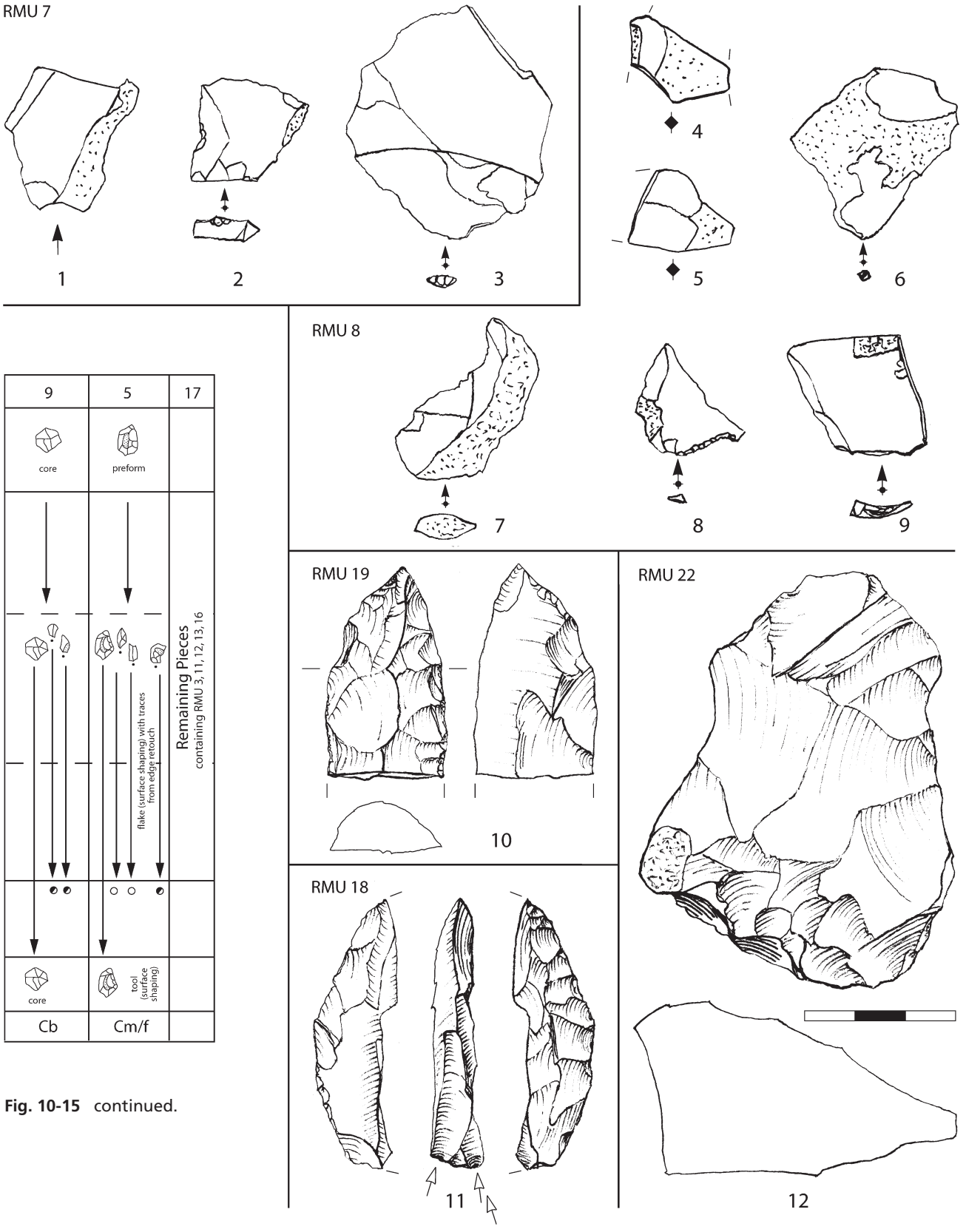

Fig. 10-15 continued.

Fig. 10-16 Kabazi II, level VI/6: selected workpieces.

ABSTRACT

КАБАЗИ II, КУЛЬТУРНО-ХРОНОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ СЛОЙ V, НИЖНИЕ ГОРИЗОНТЫ: АРТЕФАКТЫ ИЗ КАРМАНА

Ю. РИХТЕР

В нижних горизонтах пятого культурно-хронологического слоя было обнаружено незначительно колическтво артефактов, которые являются свидетельством очень кратковременного обитания в рамках циркулирующей модели освоения территории. В целом, данная модель не предусматривала особой глубины планирования относительно обеспечения будущих потребностей – утилизация артефактов преобладает над их производством. С другой стороны, основная часть кремневого материала была принесена на стоянку в "кармане". Следовательно, обитатели данных горизонтов каждый раз были подготовлены для определенной деятельности и имели при себе необходимый запас орудий. Таким образом, планирование не было изначально упущено, но вместо планирования предсказуемой деятельности, имело место планирование случайных непредвиденных ситуаций. Минимальное количество нуклеусов и орудий должно было обеспечить весь спектр непредвиденного. Жизнедеятельность на поселениях горизонтов V/4, V/5, V/6 не увеличила, а наоборот, истощила запасы артефактов и сырья групп гоминид. Вместе с тем, утилизация артефактов и сырья на этих поселениях стала возможной благодаря созданию и сохранению кремня в предшествующих посещению Кабази II хозяйственных эпизодах, что свидетельствует о наличии планирования, как составного элемента жизнеобеспечении данных групп неандертальцев.