## Prehistoric Pottery of the Ancient Near East

# 3 - Pottery What do you do with it?

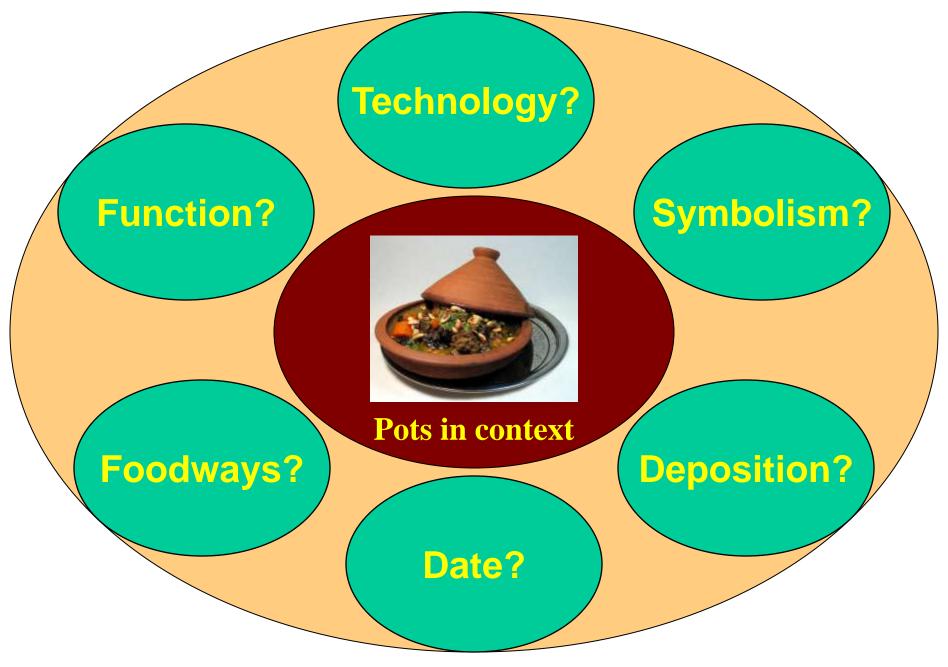
Olivier Nieuwenhuyse

**Brno April 2011** 









What can archaeologists do with sherds?

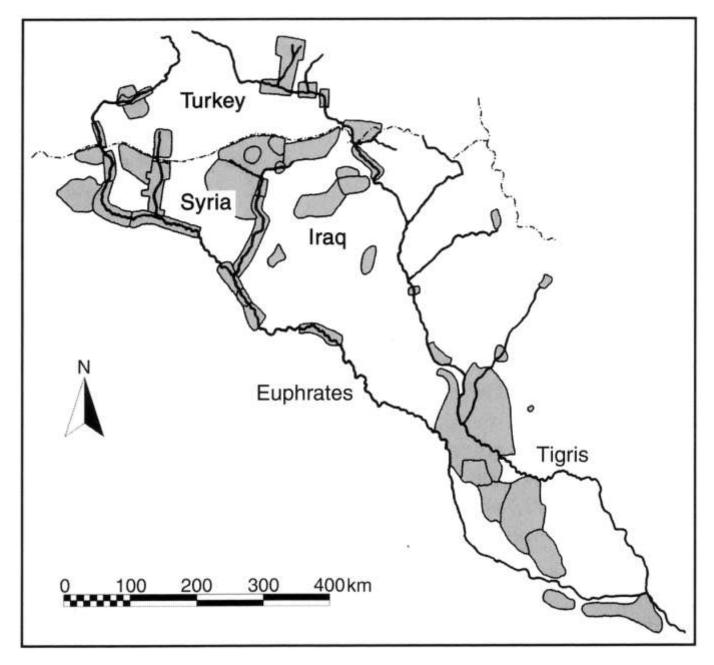


The archaeologist excavates them - and then what??

Lots of sherds

Lots of sherds

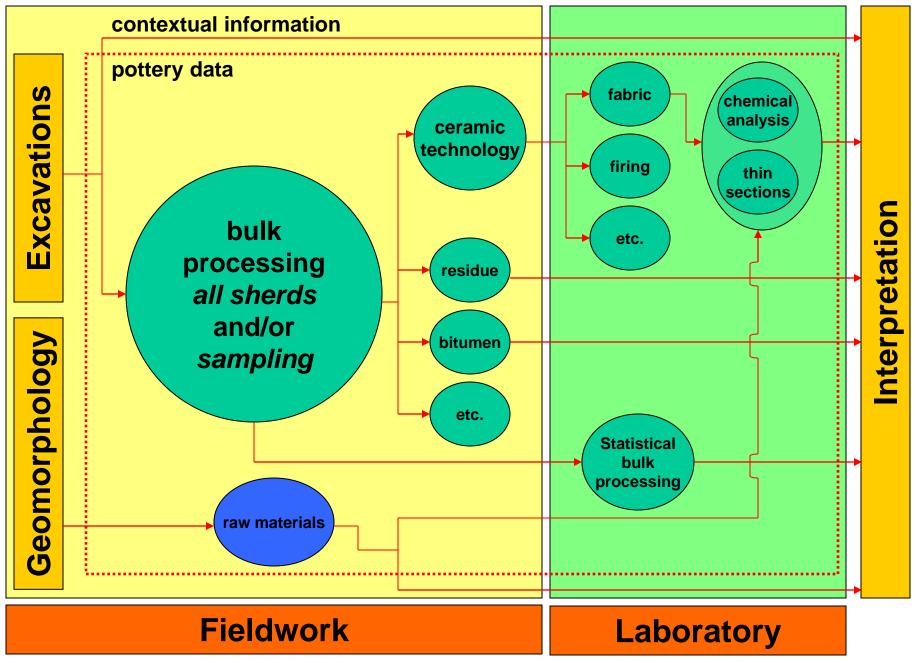
Lots of sherds



The archaeologist collects them - and then what?



A pottery specialist!



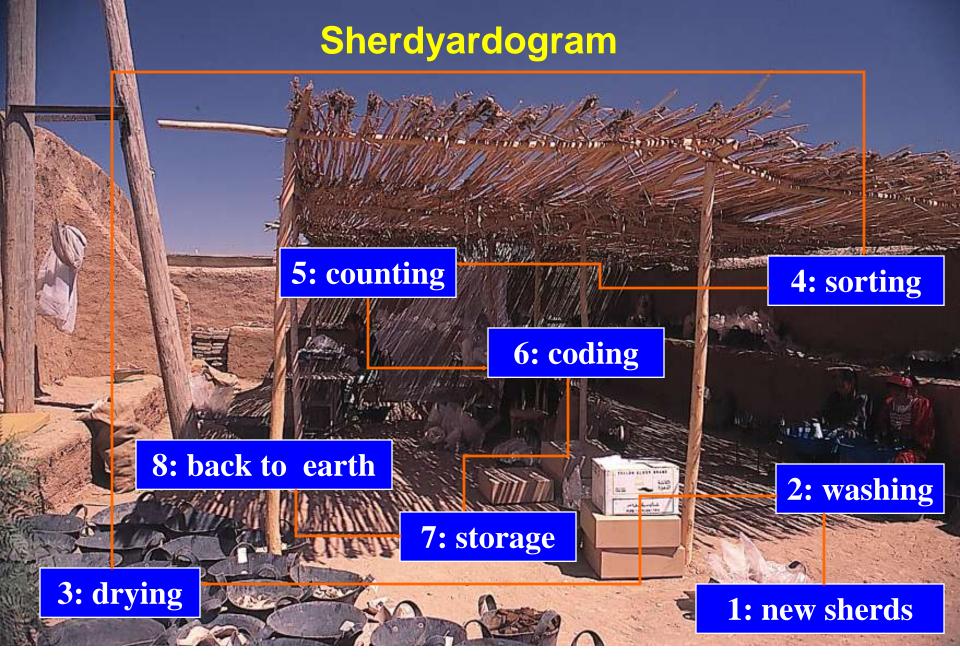
All sherds? Careful sampling



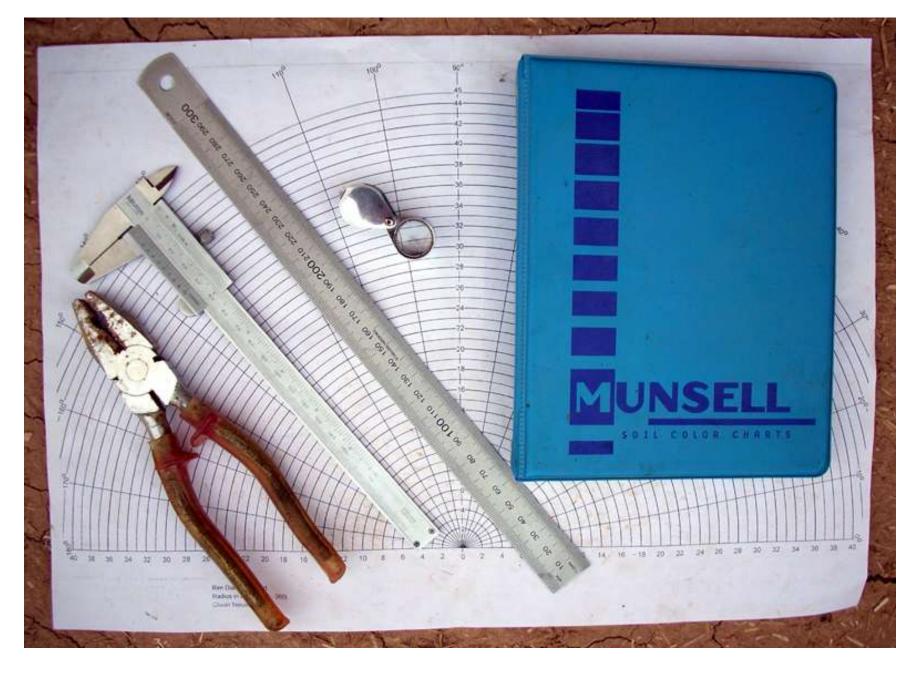
Setting up your own professional sherd yard



Sherds are fun: a comfortable place in the shade



This is where the action is: sherd migration ("sherd flow")



No expensive high-tech equipment needed



First step: quantification – how much pottery?

Square:	Locus:		Lot:		Date:	
Ware:	Complete	Section	Rim	Body	Base	Other
Standard Fine Ware	Complete	DEC11011	2007	Dogs	Dusc	Crimer
2. SFW painted				_		-
3. SFW paint/inc.						-
4. SFW inc/impr.	-			_	-	-
5. Standard Ware	-		-		_	_
6. SW burnished	-		-1	_		-
7. SW painted	-		-	_		-
8. SW paint/inc.	1			_		
9. SW incised						
10. SW r-slipped	-		-	-	-	-
11. SW applique	-		_	_		_
12. SW p.burn.	-		-	_		
40, SW binumen	-					
43. SW impressed	-				_	-
40. 5 to addressed				-		
13. Grey-Black Ware						
14. Gr.Bl. p.burn.	1					
15. Gr.Bl. imp/inc						
16. Dark-Faced Burnished Ware						
17. DFBW slipped			1			
18. DFBW painted						
19. DFBW incised						
20. DFBW p.inc						
21. DFBW p.burn.	1					
22. Mineral Coarse Ware						
23. Orange Fine Ware						
24. OFW painted						
25. OFW slipped	1					
26. Fine Painted Ware			_	_		
27. FPW painted						1
28. Halaf Fine Ware	1					
29. HFW painted						
30. HFW incised						
31. Fine Ware general						1
41. Early Fine Ware	†	1				+
42. Early GBW	1					
44. EFW red-slipped	1					-
45. EFW painted	1	-				1
46. EGBW pattern-burnished	1		-		-	-
51. Mineral Light Ware	1	+	_		-	-
52. Mineral Dark Ware	-					
53. MLW red-slipped						
54. MLW painted	-	-				-
24 Men paniqu	1		-		-	+
	-	+	-	_	_	-
45 LBA garbage	-		-	_		_

How many sherds? Make your own counting sheet

Square:	Locus:		Lot:	- 8	Date:	
Ware:	Complete	Section	Rim	Body	Base	Other
Standard Fine Ware	-	33230000		75,3334	100000	
2. SFW painted						
3. SFW paint/inc.				-	_	1
4. SFW inc/impr.		1				1
5. Standard Ware						_
6. SW burnished						
7. SW painted						
8. SW paint/inc.						
9. SW incised						
10. SW r-slipped		1				
11. SW applique	1					
12. SW p.burn.						
40, SW binumen		1				
43. SW impressed						
13. Grey-Black Ware	1	1			-	
14. Gr.Bl. p.burn.						
15. Gr.Bl. insp/inc						
16. Dark-Faced Burnished Ware				_	_	_
17. DFBW slipped						
18. DFBW painted		1				
19. DFBW incised						
20. DFBW p.inc						
21. DFBW p.burn.		1				-
22. Mineral Coarse Ware				_		
23. Orange Fine Ware	<del>                                     </del>	+	_		_	_
24. OFW painted	-	1				
25. OFW slipped						
26. Fine Painted Ware		1				_
27. FPW painted		1				_
28. Halaf Fine Ware	_	1	_	-		_
29. HFW painted						
30. HFW incised		1				
31. Fine Ware general				-		
41. Early Fine Ware	1	1		_	-	1
42. Early GBW						
44. EFW red-slipped					-	
45. EFW painted		1				
46. EGBW pattern-burnished		-	-		-	
51. Mineral Light Ware	1			-		
52. Mineral Dark Ware		-				
53. MLW red-slipped						
54. MLW painted						
punite	1	-	_	_	-	+
	-	-	_	_		_

#### **Shape of fragment**

Locus:		Lot:		Date:	
Complete	Section	Rim	Body	Base	Other
-			- COOLAND		
	1				
	1				
				1	
				1	
	1				
	1				
	1				
					1
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#### **Type of pottery**

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CERÀMICA	intat Halaf si q Totals ne	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERAMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf bas	Totals ne es	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf bas Pintat Halaf ans	Totals ne es es	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf bas Pintat Halaf ans Piain Halaf inforn	Totals ne es	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf bas Pintat Halaf ans Plain Halaf inforn	Totals ne ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ce	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf ans Pintat Halaf inforn Plain Halaf vor Plain Halaf bas	Totals ne ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ce	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf bas Pintat Halaf ans Plain Halaf inforn Plain Halaf vor	Totals ne ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ce	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf ans Pintat Halaf inforn Plain Halaf vor Plain Halaf bas Plain Halaf ans	Totals ne es	és monocrom (	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforr Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf ans Pintat Halaf inforn Plain Halaf vor Plain Halaf bas Plain Halaf ans	Totals  Totals  ne   es   es   es   es   es   es   es	monocrom  monocrom  in the second sec	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
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CERÀMICA diferenciar el p Pintat Halaf inforn Pintat Halaf bas Pintat Halaf ans Plain Halaf inforn Plain Halaf vor Plain Halaf bas Plain Halaf ans	Totals ne cs	monocrom  monocrom  in the second sec	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	
CERÀMICA diferenciar el p  Pintat Halaf inform Pintat Halaf vor Pintat Halaf inform Plain Halaf inform Plain Halaf bas Plain Halaf bas Plain Halaf ans Indicar tipus desp	Totals  ne ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ces ce	monocrom  monocrom  in the second sec	de les 4 entere	urn mate e	brillant,	monotó ó b	

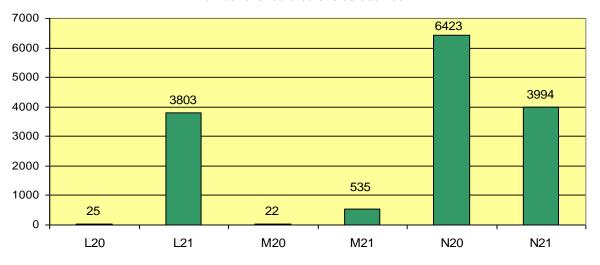
Similar system, different site: Tell Chagar Bazar



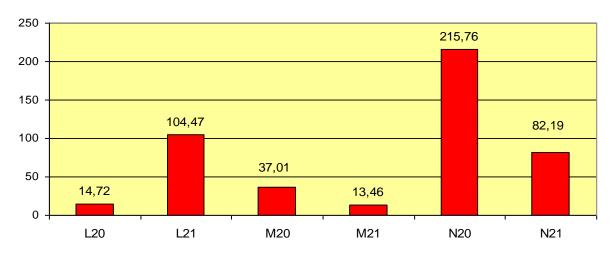
To weigh or not to weigh...

### How much pottery?

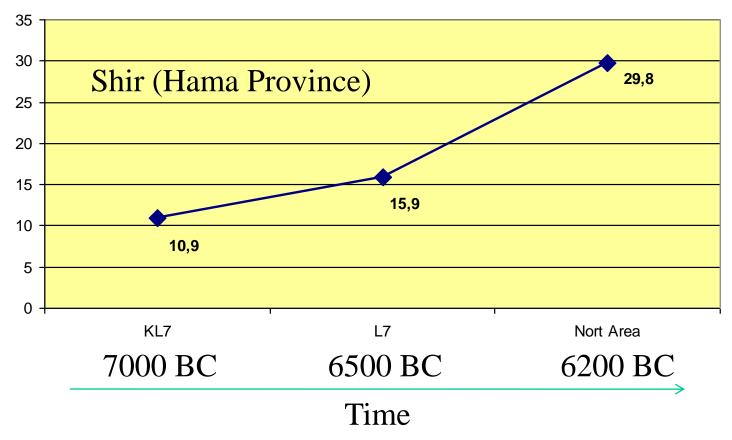
Number of excavated sherds counted



Weight of excavated sherds counted (kg)

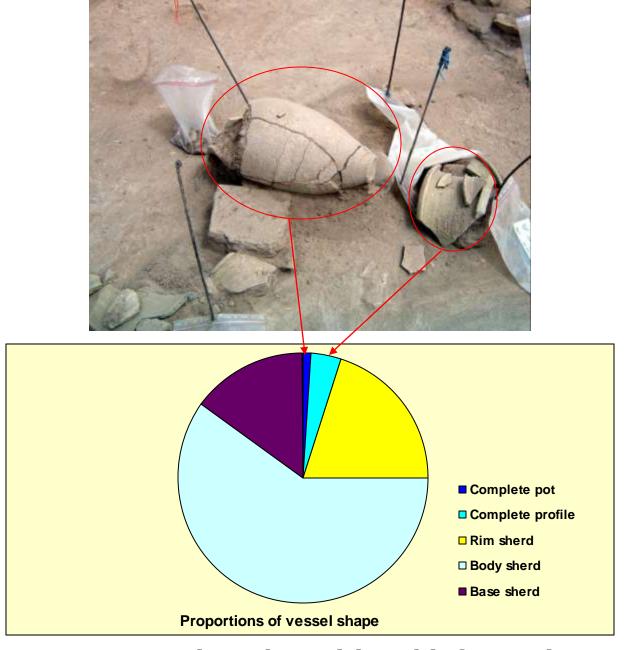


Weights: a different measure of quantity



"BMI index"
Average weight of body sherd (Body Mass Index)

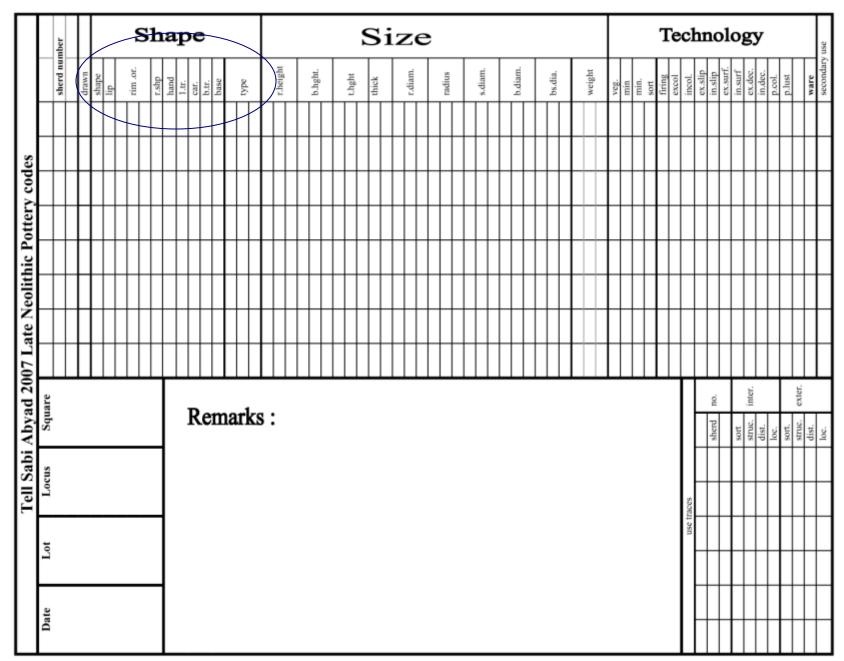
Weight: information on 1) fragmentation, 2) size, 3) strength



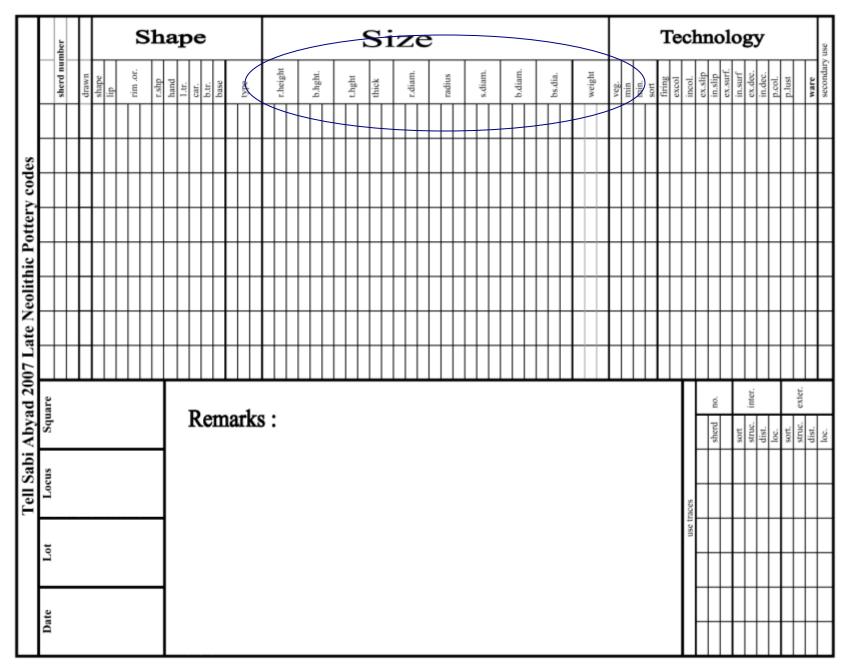
Fragmentation: depositional information

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**Build your own code sheet** 



**Shape** 



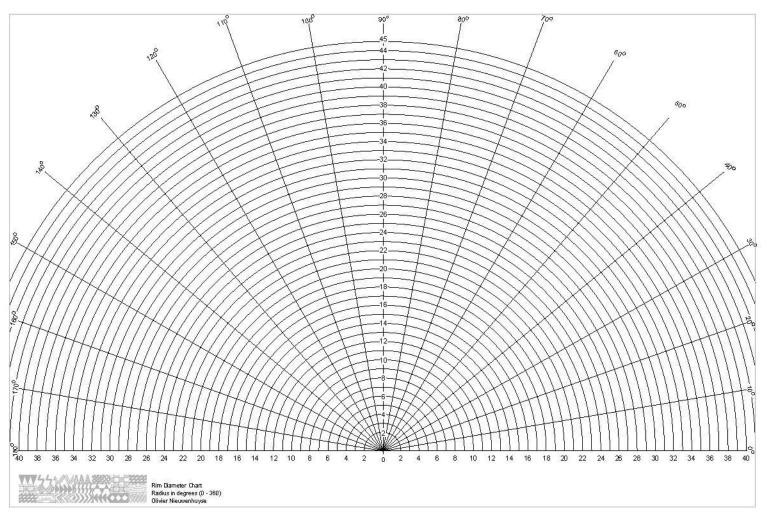
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**Ceramic technology** 

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Similar system, different site: Tell Chagar Bazar





Measuring rim diameter and thickness



"Excavation is destruction" – well, so is fabric analysis



Quantity, size, and type of non-plastic inclusions



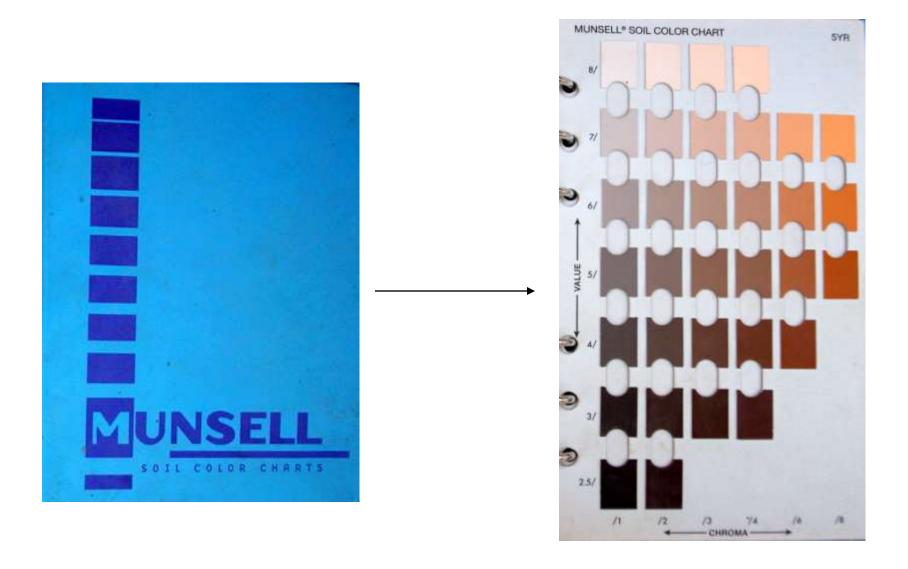
"Pot reading" - looking for traces of the shaping process



Pot reading: traces of the shaping method: coiling



Pot reading: traces of the scraping the exterior surface



Colour: information on raw materials, firing, use, deposition



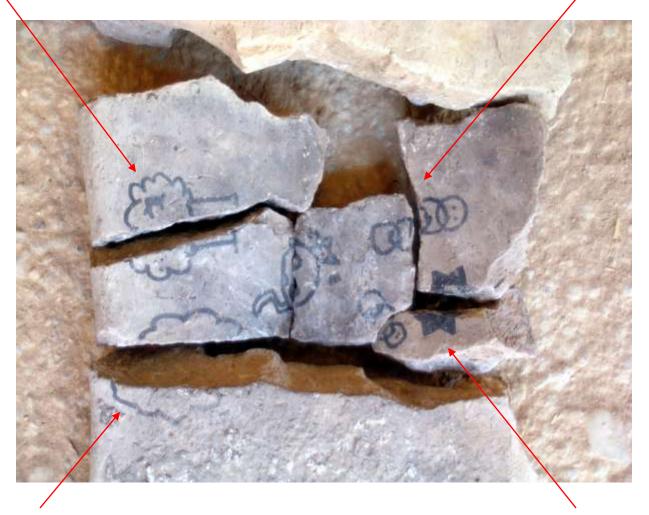
For instance: completely oxidized or not?



Finally - to restore or not to restore, that's the question...

Impossible to remove

Water resistant



Penetrating the pottery

Very conspicuous

... but if you must ... use your mind! (not your marker)



**Life after Death - 21th century depositional practices** 



Helping Salladin: a wall of sherds in the Hama 'Azm Palace



Think carefully about your sherd deposition!



Think about your future