



A Preliminary Analysis of Cambodian Spindle Whorls

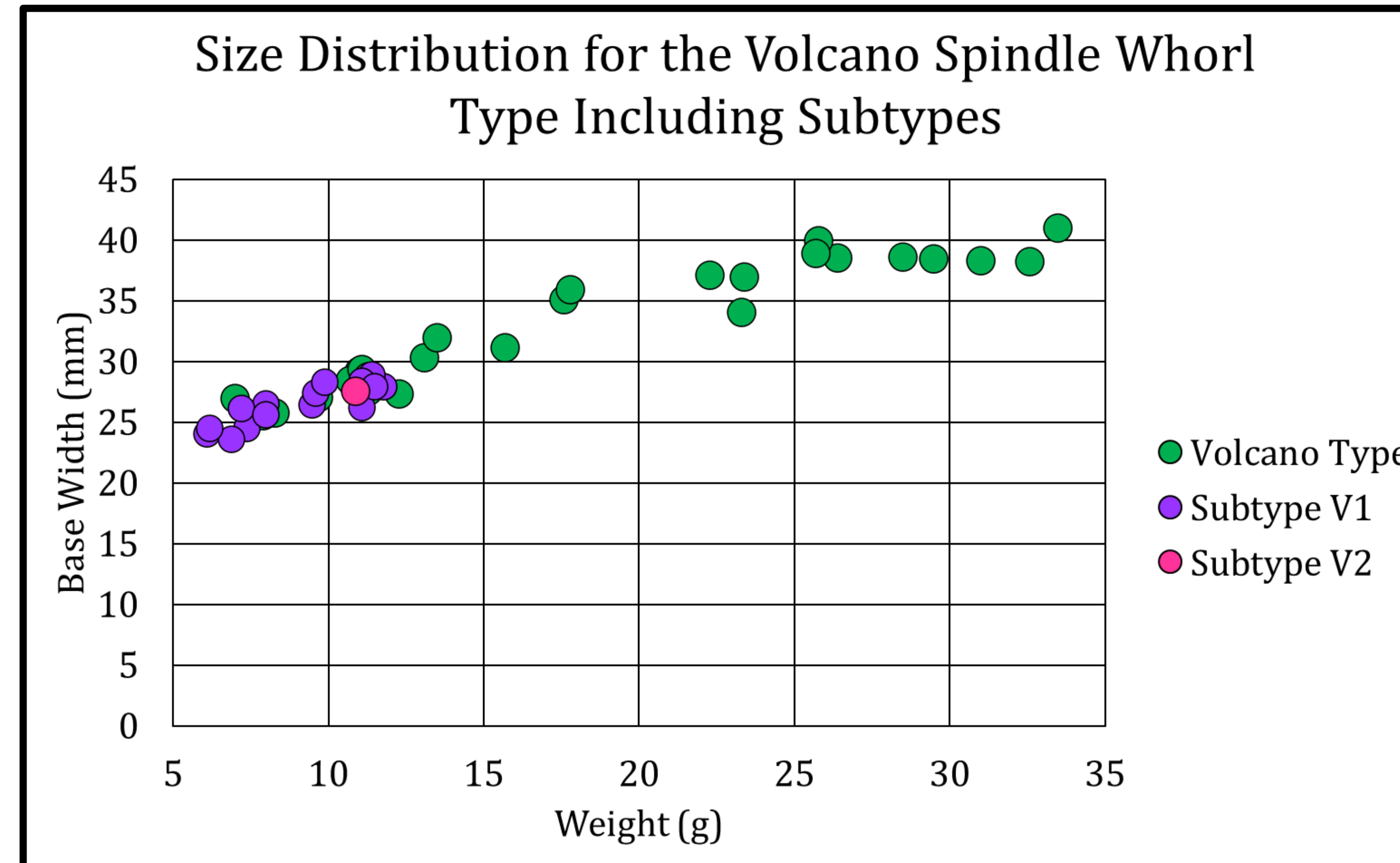
Marie LeRoux, Mentor: Alison Carter, PhD

University of Oregon, Department of Anthropology



Abstract

A collection of 362 ceramic spindle whorls purchased in Cambodia has been donated to University of Oregon's Anthropology Department. These artifacts likely date to between 500 BCE and 500 CE and are thought to have been looted from the site of Angkor Borei, although it is possible that other neighboring sites are represented as well. As such, this project focused on conducting a preliminary analysis of this collection by categorizing, weighing, and measuring them. In this poster, I present my findings and a preliminary typology including four distinct types. Two of these types have each had multiple subtypes identified.



The Volcano Spindle Whorl type has two current subtypes V1 and V2. All of the V1 subtype are within the same size class. There are two distinct weight classes within the base type.



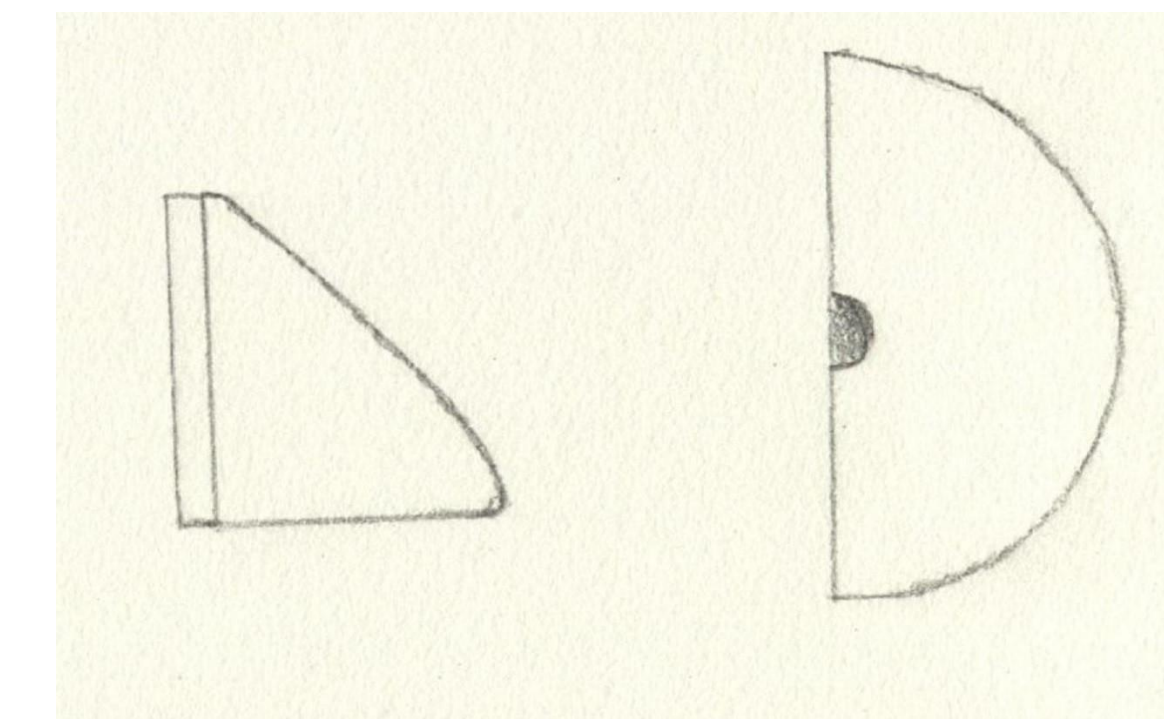
Hershey's Kiss Type

Discussion

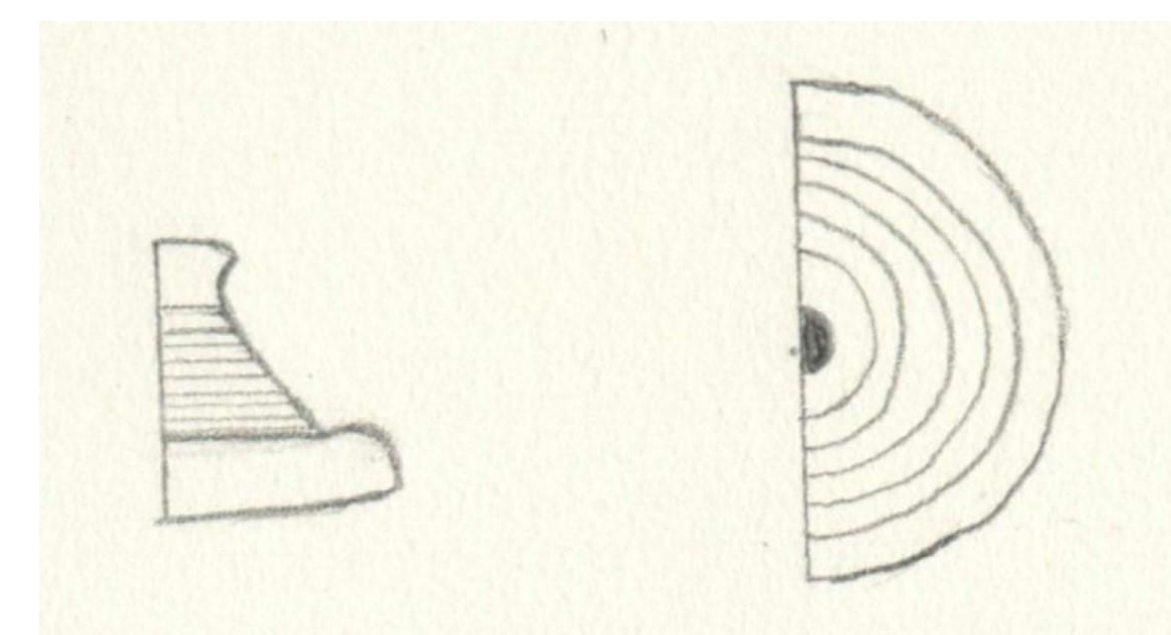
- Spindle whorls are used as a weight on a drop spindle. They are used in textile manufacture and are typically very durable, making them well suited for archaeological analysis of textile production in ancient contexts.
- The Straw Farming Hat type & the SFH2 subtype do not have a statistically significant sample size.
- The Oil Lamp type displays very little significant variation in both size and appearance. This lack of variation is unique to this type.
- Cambodian Spindle Whorls will continue to be categorized into a typology until a final product can be presented that can then be used for future research on objects with provenience.
- The Hershey's Kiss type has the highest damage rate of all identified types with a 37% inclusion rate versus the 75% inclusion rate or higher in all other identified types. The shape may be more prone to breakage than the others but this may not explain this high of a damage rate.



Decorated Hershey's Kiss Type



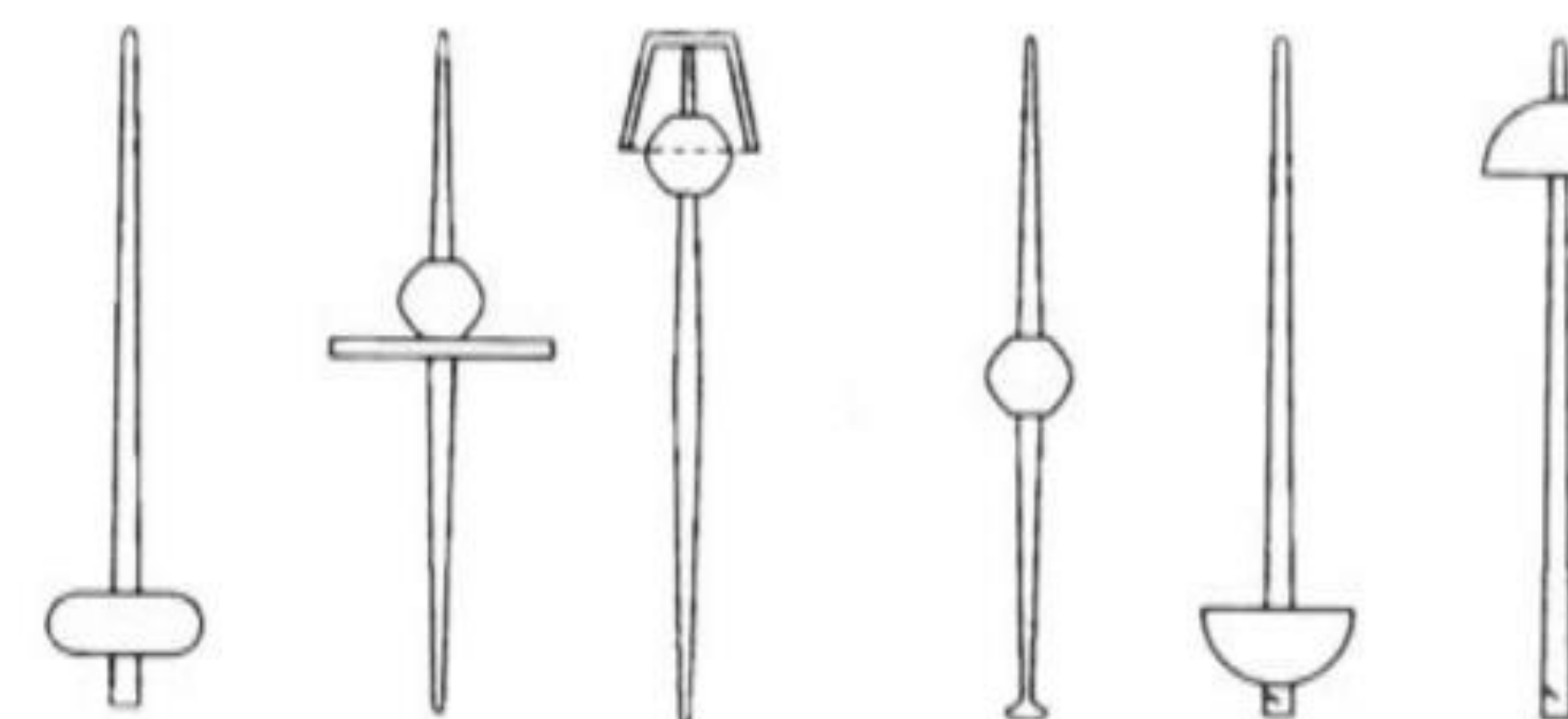
Volcano Spindle Whorl



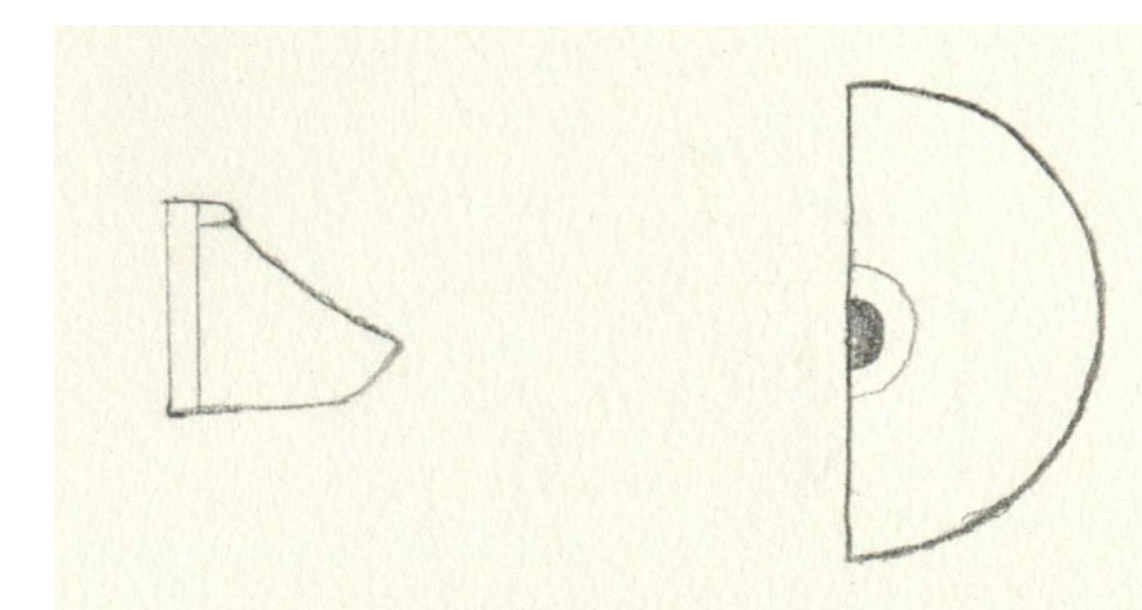
Straw Farming Hat



Volcano Spindle Whorl



Range of possible positions of whorls on spindles (Cameron 2002)



Oil Lamp Type

Next Steps

- Complete & digitize a full typology for this collection.
- Take High Quality photos of representative specimens of each type, subtype, and all decorated specimens.
- Complete a firing method analysis to assess the possible use of multiple firing methods and what purpose these methods may have served functionally.
- Complete a temper type analysis to identify the temper type(s) used & explore the functionality of the chosen temper type(s).
- Complete a comparative ceramics analysis between these spindle whorls and fired ceramics from a similar time period from Angkor Borei.

References

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- . "Spindle Whorls." *The Origins of Angkor, Volume 1: The Excavation of Ban Lum Khao*, edited by Charles Higham and Rachanie Thosarat, Thai Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 2004, pp. 211-16.
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