

Dating of Materials

“Relative dating of materials is done by looking at wall thicknesses, construction materials, colour and make-up of mortars, and the height and hardness of bricks. In the latter case, mud bricks are generally thin or flat (>60mm), so that they can easily be sun-dried (summer months), and generally reckoned to be the oldest (early 18th century). Bricks of thicker dimensions (60-70mm) date from about the second quarter to the late 18th century, while bricks of 80mm height, date from about late 18th century to early 19th century onwards. One should beware of the re-use of earlier bricks at a later stage, a practice that is even common today. In addition, on farms the same areas are quarried for clay for generations, and the same brick moulds could be in use for long periods. Brickwork can thus be difficult to date at the best of times.”

Archaeologist, Hennie Vos

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