Obsidian Source Provenance Studies in the Hohokam Core
New Perspectives from the Middle Gila River, South-Central Arizona
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Introduction

Obsidian source provenance studies are a valuable tool in understanding the mobility and exchange networks of ancient populations. Recent work by Shackley (2003) highlights the importance of studying the sources of obsidian used by ancient communities. These studies can provide insights into the social, cultural, and economic relationships between communities. The use of obsidian as a raw material can indicate patterns of exchange and inter-regional interaction.

Archaeological Objetive Studies

Obsidian documentary studies in the Hohokam Core, New Perspectives from the Middle Gila River, South-Central Arizona, provide new insights into the socioeconomic relationships of ancient communities. These relationships involve many factors including value, the number and type of transactions between the source and the user, and the geographic and political context of the exchange.

Obdian Source and Archaeological Site Locations

The Hohokam core area is located in the lower Gila River Valley, with several major archaeological sites including Snaketown, Casa Grande, and Salt Arm. The use of obsidian at these sites provides a window into the exchange networks of the Hohokam people.

Obdian Source Properties From The Gila River Indian Community, Collected During the Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project

Obdian Trace Elements Analysis

Trace element analyses were performed at the Radiometric Isotope Laboratory, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of California, Merced, California. The total sample set (n = 132) was collected from 2000-2002. The samples were analyzed for Rb, Sr, Zr, and Y in a 125 micron Be window, an x-ray generator that operates from 4-50 kV/0.02-2.0 mA at 0.02 increments, using an IBM PC based Spectrace/ThermoNoranTM QuanX energy dispersive x-ray fluorescence spectrometer. The spectrometer is equipped to measure Rb, Sr, Zr, Y, Th, and Gawere, but these are rarely useful in discriminating glass sources and are not generally reported.

Obsdian Source Provenance and Archaeological Site Locations

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Hohokam Obdian Use

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The use of obsidian at the Hohokam core sites provides a window into the social and economic relationships of the Hohokam people. The use of obsidian at Snaketown and Casa Grande indicates a strong exchange network with other regions, while the use of obsidian at Salt Arm suggests a more localized exchange network.

References Cited