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## **Title**

Source Provenance of Obsidian Artifacts from Late Period Sites in the Perry Mesa Area, Central Arizona

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## **SOURCE PROVENANCE OF OBSIDIAN ARTIFACTS FROM LATE PERIOD SITES IN THE PERRY MESA AREA, CENTRAL ARIZONA**

### *NOTE TO READER: "UNKNOWNS" ARE NOW ASSIGNED TO SOURCE BASED ON LATER DISCOVERIES*

by

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the largest obsidian studies in the region, the analysis here of over 200 obsidian artifacts from late period contexts in the Perry Mesa area of central Arizona indicates a reliance on Government Mountain obsidian almost exclusively to the exclusion of other sources in northern Arizona. Minor amounts of Mount Floyd Volcanic Field obsidian was also used, but in very low proportions.

### **LABORATORY SAMPLING, ANALYSIS AND INSTRUMENTATION**

#### **ANALYSIS AND INSTRUMENTATION**

This assemblage was analyzed on a Spectrace/Thermo *QuanX* energy-dispersive x-ray spectrometer at the Archaeological XRF Laboratory, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at the University of California, Berkeley.

All samples were analyzed whole with little or no formal preparation. The results presented here are quantitative in that they are derived from "filtered" intensity values ratioed to the appropriate x-ray continuum regions through a least squares fitting formula rather than plotting the proportions of the net intensities in a ternary system (McCarthy and Schamber 1981; Schamber 1977). Or more essentially, these data through the analysis of international rock standards, allow for inter-instrument comparison with a predictable degree of certainty (Hampel 1984).

The spectrometer is equipped with an electronically cooled Cu x-ray target with 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 microprocessor and WinTrace™ reduction software. The xray tube is operated at 30 kV, 0.14 mA, using a 0.05 mm (medium) Pd primary beam filter in an air path at 200 seconds livetime to generate x-ray intensity  $K\alpha$ -line data for elements titanium (Ti), manganese (Mn), iron (as  $Fe<sup>T</sup>$ ), rubidium (Rb), strontium (Sr), yttrium (Y), zirconium (Zr),

and niobium (Nb). Weight percent iron (Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>T</sup>) can be derived by multiplying ppm estimates by 1.4297(10-4). Trace element intensities were converted to concentration estimates by employing a least-squares calibration line established for each element from the analysis of international rock standards certified by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the US. Geological Survey (USGS), Canadian Centre for Mineral and Energy Technology, and the Centre de Recherches Pétrographiques et Géochimiques in France (Govindaraju 1994). Further details concerning the petrological choice of these elements in Southwest obsidians is available in Shackley (1992, 1995, 2003; also Mahood and Stimac 1991; and Hughes and Smith 1993). Specific standards used for the best fit regression calibration for elements Ti through Nb include G-2 (basalt), AGV-1 (andesite), GSP-1, SY-2 (syenite), BHVO-1 (hawaiite), STM-1 (syenite), QLO-1 (quartz latite), RGM-1 (obsidian), W-2 (diabase), BIR-1 (basalt), SDC-1 (mica schist), TLM-1 (tonalite), SCO-1 (shale), all US Geological Survey standards, and BR-N (basalt) from the Centre de Recherches Pétrographiques et Géochimiques in France (Govindaraju 1994). In addition to the reported values here, Ni, Cu, Zn, Th, and Ga were measured, but these are rarely useful in discriminating glass sources and are not generally reported.

 The data from both systems were translated directly into Excel™ for Windows software for manipulation and on into SPSS™ for Windows for statistical analyses. In order to evaluate these quantitative determinations, machine data were compared to measurements of known standards during each run. An analysis of RGM-1 is included in Table 1. Source nomenclature follows Lesko (1989) and Shackley (1988, 1995, 2005). Further information on the laboratory instrumentation can be found at: http://www.swxrflab.net/ and Shackley (1998). Trace element data exhibited in Tables 1 and 2 are reported in parts per million (ppm), a quantitative measure by weight (see also Figure 1).

#### **DISCUSSION**

While it is not unusual for Government Mountain obsidian to dominate central and northern Arizona assemblages, it is unusual to see a nearly complete dominance in a late period assemblage (Bayman and Shackley 1999; Shackley 2005; see Table 3 and Figure 2 here). It is one of the best obsidian media for tool production, and for the large nodule Quaternary sources the best in my estimation. This, however, does not necessarily explain the dominance in these sites. More likely it is an interface between raw material quality, access, and social factors. Perhaps more significant is the complete lack of obsidian raw material from Sonoran Desert sources (e.g. Vulture, Sauceda Mountains) which are approximately the same distance, but to the south. This northern dominance of raw materials may be mirrored in other data sets as well. The obsidian source provenance suggests that the procurement range or group interactions were to the north rather than south.

 A note about the Mount Floyd Field sources: The sources in the Mount Floyd field have been named in a somewhat confusing way (Lesko 1989; Tables 2 and 3 here). This is, in part, due to the naming conventions similar to taphonomic conventions in biology. The first name used is normally the one kept, with some important exceptions. So, Partridge Creek is used for that chemical group derived from the Round Mountain dome, Presley Wash for the glassy rhyodacites recovered in the upper Partridge Creek system, and Black Tank for the marekanites from that feature north of Round Mountain. In Figure 2, I have used Round Mountain for the Partridge Creek locality, and Presley Wash/Partridge Creek for the Presley Wash locality. Partridge Creek (Round Mountain) glass is available throughout the Partridge Creek stream system at least as far as Chino Valley relatively near these sites. The relatively low proportion of Partridge Creek in these sites then is a further indication of raw material preference and/or social factors in procurement given the dominance of Government Mountain obsidian.

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Table 1. X-ray fluorescence concentrations for selected trace elements for RGM-1 (n=10 runs).  $\pm$  values represent first standard deviation computations for the group of measurements. All values are in parts per million (ppm) as reported in Govindaraju (1994) and this study. RGM-1 is a U.S. Geological rhyolite standard. FeT can be converted to  $Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>T$  with a multiplier of 1.4297(10-4) (see also Glascock 1991).

<b>SAMPLE</b>		Mn	Fe	Rb.	Sr			Nb
RGM-1 (Govindaraju	1600	279	12998	149	108	25	219	8.9
1994) RGM-1 (this study; n=10)	$1585 \pm 72$	$308 + 16$	13158±129	$148+3$	$109 + 2$		$20 \pm 2$ 216 $\pm 5$	8±2

Table 2. Elemental concentrations and source assignments for the archaeological specimens.











#### 0 24 1 4 1 30 .0% 80.0% 3.3% 13.3% 3.3% 100.0% .0% 12.6% 33.3% 80.0% 50.0% 14.9% .0% 11.9% .5% 2.0% .5% 14.9% 0 0 0 0 61 .0% 100.0% .0% .0% .0% 100.0% .0% 31.9% .0% .0% .0% 30.2%  $.0\%$  30.2% .0% .0% .0% .0% 30.2% 1 | 30 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 33 3.0% 90.9% .0% 3.0% 3.0% 100.0% 100.0% 15.7% .0% 20.0% 50.0% 16.3% .5% 14.9% .0% .5% .5% 16.3% 0 0 0 0 7 .0% 100.0% .0% .0% .0% 100.0%  $.0\%$  3.7%  $.0\%$  .0% .0% .0% 3.5%  $.0\%$  3.5%  $.0\%$  .0% .0% .0% 3.5% 0 0 0 0 3  $.0\%$  | 100.0%  $\sim$  .0%  $\sim$  .0%  $\sim$  .0%  $\sim$  100.0% .0% 1.6% .0% .0% .0% 1.5% .0% 1.5% .0% .0% .0% 1.5% 0 0 0 0 3  $.0\%$  | 100.0% | .0% | .0% | .0% | 100.0% .0% 1.6% .0% .0% .0% 1.5% .0% 1.5% .0% .0% .0% 1.5% 0 0 0 0 1  $.0\%$  100.0%  $.0\%$  .0% .0% .0% .0% 100.0% .0% .5% .5% .0% .0% .0% .5% .0% .5% .5% .0% .0% .0% .5% 0 0 0 17 .0% 100.0% .0% .0% .0% 100.0%  $.0\%$   $.0\%$   $.0\%$  .0% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0%  $.0\%$   $.0\%$   $.0\%$  .0% .0% .0% 8.4% 0 0 0 0 3  $.0\%$  | 100.0%  $\vert$  .0%  $\vert$  .0%  $\vert$  .0% | 100.0% .0% 1.6% .0% .0% .0% 1.5% .0% 1.5% .0% .0% .0% 1.5% 0 0 0 0 7 .0% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0%  $.0\%$  3.7%  $.0\%$  .0% .0% .0% 3.5% **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total NA 11434 NA 11648 NA 12556 NA10022 NA10066 NA10067 NA10070.1 NA11434 NA11438 NA11439 **Sample** Black Tank Government Mtn Partridge Creek | Presley Wash | unknown Source Total

**Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total **Count** % within Sample % within Source % of Total

NA11645.1

NA13312.1

#### Table 3. Crosstabulation of site by obsidian source provenance. Non-obsidian removed.



 $.0\%$  3.5% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0% .0%. 0 0 0 0 1  $.0\%$  | 100.0%  $.0\%$  | .0%  $.0\%$  | .0% | 100.0%  $.0\%$  .5% .5% .0% .0% .0% .5% .0% .5% .5% .0% .0% .0% .5% 0 0 0 0 1  $.0\%$  | 100.0%  $\sim$  .0%  $\sim$  .0%  $\sim$  .0%  $\sim$  100.0% .0% .5% .5% .0% .0% .0% .5% .0% .5% .5% .0% .0% .0% .5%



Figure 1. Rb versus Sr biplot of the elemental concentrations for the archaeological specimens. Given the distinctiveness of these sources, Rb and Sr are generally sufficient to discriminate the northern Arizona sources. The one "unknown" grouped with Government Mountain is quite distinctive in other elements.

DELORME



Figure 2. Landsat digital elevation model showing site locations relative to obsidian sources in central and northern Arizona.