

Sources and their characterisation

Obsidian is typically formed by quenching of essential quantities of volatile poor viscous silicic lava: instantaneously, at the same time and of the same chemical composition. These factors facilitate the characterisation of the sources, by the determination of the temporal, petrographic and geochemical features. This is why obsidian is especially suitable for provenance studies. The overall pattern can be, however, quite complicated by multiple sources lying very close - or very far - from each other, lava mixing, and multiple eruptions in the same district or the lack / uncertainty of the primary sources. Secondary sources can be located on eroded / weathered surfaces but cannot be usually unambiguously connected to exact lava flows and layers. How these factors influence prehistoric access and exploitation as well as modern source characterisation studies?