

Geochemical analysis of vitreous rocks exploited during the formative period in the Atacama Region, Northern Chile

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Petrographic analysis and geochemical characterization studies were carried out on vitreous dacite and/or rhyodacite artefacts from Formative period archaeological sites in the upper Salado River Basin in the Atacama Desert, northern Chile. These were compared with samples taken from two source areas located within the subregion, named Linzor and Paniri. Source samples and archaeological specimens were analysed by inductively coupled plasma - mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) combined with optical emission plasma - mass spectrometry (ICP-OES) and atomic absorption spectroscopy (AAS). Results from the limited number of samples analysed indicate that the Linzor source seems to have been the primary source exploited during the Early and Late Formative periods in the Salado River Basin. © 2009 University of Oxford.