

ARCHAEOLOGY
The Science of the Human Past, 3e
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Chapter 6: Classification and Analysis of Artifacts

Classification and Typology

Morphology Function

- Allows communication via a shared terminology
- Important for documenting and explaining changes in types, forms, and functions

Attributes

Sites and artifacts are classified according to various attributes.

Quantitative Qualitative

Were these attributes relevant to the original maker or user?

Temporal Types

Temporal types are sites or artifacts tied to specific times.

- Can be used for dating
- Does not work well with artifacts which change little over time.



Assemblage Types

- All artifacts and ecofacts collected from a site
- Classified for purposes of site-to-site comparison
- Reveals general similarities and differences

Classifying and Typing Artifacts

Stone

- **Ground**
 - ♦ Percussion
 - ♦ Pecking
 - ♦ Grinding
 - ♦ Polishing
- **Flaked**
 - ♦ “Flintknapping”
 - ♦ Percussion flaking
 - ♦ Pressure Flaking
 - ♦ Biface/ Uniface
 - ♦ Blades/ Flakes

Classifying and Typing Artifacts

Ceramics

Terra-cottas Stonewares

Earthenwares Porcelains

Classifying and Typing Artifacts

Metal

Metallurgy Bronze

Iron Steel

Classifying and Typing Artifacts

Glass

Faience Storage

Windows Beads

Classifying and Typing Artifacts

Shell and Bone

- **Shell**
 - ♦ Beads
 - ♦ Tokens
 - ♦ Pendants
 - ♦ Cups
 - ♦ Bowls
 - ♦ Fishhooks
- **Bone**
 - ♦ Needles
 - ♦ Awls
 - ♦ Scrapers
 - ♦ Beads
 - ♦ Tubes
 - ♦ Punches

Classifying and Typing Artifacts

Perishables

- Basketry
- Wood
- Leather
- Hide

Analyzing Artifacts: Use-Wear Analysis

- Examine Microscopic Wear Patterns
- Use Replicated Tools

**Analyzing Artifacts:
Geochemical Sourcing**

- **Chemical composition**
 - ◊ Acts as a 'fingerprint'
 - ◊ Reveals the original source of the material

- **Especially useful with:**
 - ◊ Stones (obsidian, jade, turquoise)
 - ◊ Metals (copper, tin, silver, gold)
 - ◊ Clay (as in ceramics)

**Analyzing Artifacts:
Residue Analysis**

Residues

- Dried Food
- Wine Stains
- Resins
- Embalming Chemicals
- Adhesive
- Proteins

**Analyzing Artifacts:
Residue Analysis**

Analysis

- Microscopic Analysis
- Gas Chromatography
- Protein Residue Analysis
- Infrared Scanning

Analyzing Artifacts:
DNA Analysis

Human Evolution

Trace Migrations

Identify Individuals

Determine
Domestic Plants and
Animals
