**Classic Period Projectile Point Traditions in Southeastern Arizona**

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**Introduction**

Similar projectile point types were manufactured across cultural and geographic boundaries in southern Arizona during the Classic period (AD 1150-1450) (Silva 2006). This pattern coincides with the arrival of northern migrant groups, changing settlement patterns and resource availability, and an increase in obsidian use (Clark and Lyons 2012). These social, technological, and environmental factors may have influenced projectile point designs in the Tucson Basin and San Pedro Valley. This analysis was conducted to identify variation in projectile point attributes among sites with different cultural influences and access to resources.

**Research Questions**

- Did the arrival of migrant groups influence projectile point design traditions?
- Is projectile point variation associated with different levels of large-game hunting or potential for conflict?
- Are projectile points different among sites with different obsidian procurement patterns?

**Methods**

- Compared metrical and morphological attributes of 655 projectile points from five early Classic period sites in the Tucson Basin.
- Compared metrical and morphological attributes of 122 projectile points from 21 late Classic period sites in the San Pedro Valley.
- Used new and existing obsidian source data (Mills et al. 2012; Shackley 2017) to identify raw material procurement patterns.

**San Pedro Valley, Late Classic Period, AD 1300-1450**

Migrant communities: Ancestral Pueblo groups arrived in the area around AD 1275 and settled at two known migrant enclaves (Clark and Lyons 2012). To the south, Babocomari Village lacks evidence of cultural influence from northern migrants (Di Peso 1951).

Hunting or conflict: Large game resources are abundant at sites in this area, and hunting was an important activity. No direct evidence for conflict; migrant influx may have heightened tensions (Clark et al. 2012; Di Peso 1951).

**San Pedro Valley sites in sample. Map: Catherine Gilman.**

**Tucson Basin, Early Classic Period, AD 1150-1300**

Migrant communities: Groups from the Mogollon Highlands moved into the northeastern Tucson Basin (Gregonis 2011). Outside groups were not identified at sites in the southwestern Basin (Elson and Swartz 2016; Fish et al. 1992).

Hunting or conflict: Upland sites in the northeastern Basin contained abundant large mammal bone and evidence for hunting rituals (Gregonis 2011). Artiodactyl bone is generally scarce in the northeastern Basin (Waters 2016). No direct evidence for conflict.

**Tucson Basin sites in study. Circled sites were home to local and migrant groups. Map: Catherine Gilman.**

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**Conclusions**

- Ancestral Pueblo migrant groups did not introduce new projectile point traditions or design preferences into the region.
- Variation in base attributes on similar point types in the Tucson Basin suggests different learning traditions expressed on small points that otherwise follow socially acceptable forms.
- Points with wide concave bases may have been preferred for mortuary rituals.
- The frequency of Classic period side-notched and unnotched points at these sites is not associated with large-game hunting or potential for conflict.
- Obsidian source data continue to show differences in social ties at blended or migrant sites. However, point designs are not clearly associated with a specific source.
- "Microvariables" (Wendrich 2012) such as base attributes, serrations, notch depth, etc., may provide the best information to identify variation and different learning traditions during the Classic period in southeastern Arizona.

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