Abstract

The results of analyses of trace-elements in twenty-six samples of obsidian from 19 archaeological sites along the Atlantic coast, between Golfo San Matías Oeste (41°55´58.8´´S) and Cabo Dos Bahías (44°54´77.9´´S) are presented as a contribution to studies of sources and distribution of obsidian in archaeological sites in central Patagonia, specifically the province of Chubut, Argentina. Six different types of obsidian occur in this collection, three of which come from known obsidian sources. Four of the samples are chemically similar to obsidian type T/SCI, which is derived from near Sierra Negra (42°21´S - 66°36´W), northeast of the town of Telsen, and is located between 100 and 235 km linear distance west of the sites along the coast in which this obsidian occurs. Five of the samples are chemically similar to obsidian type SI from the vicinity of Cerro Guacho (42°28´60´´S - 68°32´93´´W) in the zone of Sacanana, and which is found between 270 and 400 km linear distance west of the sites along the coast in which this obsidian occurs. Finally, one sample from the site Cabo Dos Bahías has chemical characteristics similar to type PDAI obsidian from Pampa del Asador, in the Andean foothills of central-south Patagonia, Santa Cruz Province. Another sample of obsidian from this same source had previously been reported from a site near Puerto Madryn, along the coast of Golfo Nuevo, 800 km from Pampa del Asador. Concerning the samples from unknown sources, five samples are of an obsidian type which also occurs commonly in sites on and west of the Meseta de Somuncurá. The source is therefore believed to lie somewhere within the area of this Meseta. This type of obsidian is tentatively called type MS1. Two samples are chemically similar to obsidian type CCI? found at the archaeological site Cerro Castillo on the western edge of Meseta de Somuncurá. Nine samples are obsidian type T/SCII, previously believed to be from the same source near Sierra Negra as type T/SCI. However, a new analysis of samples from this area indicates that it is not the source of T/SCII, and the actual source of this obsidian, which is both more abundant and more widely distributed that type T/SCI, is unknown. The data indicate that different types of obsidian reached the coast from a number of independent locations between 100 km and 800 km to the West and Southwest.

Keywords

Central Patagonia; Obsidians; Sources; Circulation.