LITHIC TECHNOLOGY: MEASURES OF PRODUCTION, USE, AND CURATION

The life history of stone tools is intimately linked to tool production, use, and maintenance. These are important processes in the organization of lithic technology, or the manner in which lithic technology is embedded within human organizational strategies of land use and subsistence practices. This volume brings together essays that measure the life history of stone tools relative to retouch values, raw material constraints, and evolutionary processes. Collectively, they explore the association of technological organization with facets of tool form such as reduction sequences, tool production effort, artifact curation processes, and retouch measurement. Data sets cover a broad geographic and temporal span, including examples from France during the Paleolithic, the Near East during the Neolithic, and other regions such as Mongolia, Australia, and Italy. North American examples are derived from Paleoindian times to historic period aboriginal populations throughout the United States and Canada.

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LITHIC TECHNOLOGY:
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PRODUCTION, USE,
AND CURATION

Edited by
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Washington State University
In memory of Yūkiko Akama Andrefsky
CONTENTS

Preface and Acknowledgments

List of Contributors

PART I: INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, AND REVIEW

1 An Introduction to Stone Tool Life History and
Technological Organization
WILLIAM ANDREFSKY, JR.

2 Lithic Reduction, Its Measurement, and
Implications: Comments on the Volume
MICHAEL J. SHOTT AND MARGARET C. NELSON

PART II: PRODUCTION, REDUCTION, AND RETOUCH

3 Comparing and Synthesizing Unifacial Stone
Tool Reduction Indices
METIN I. EREN AND MARY E. PRENDERGAST

4 Exploring Retouch on Bifaces: Unpacking
Production, Resharpening, and Hammer Type
JENNIFER WILSON AND WILLIAM ANDREFSKY, JR.

5 The Construction of Morphological Diversity:
A Study of Mousterian Implement Retouching at
Combe Grenal
PETER HISCOCK AND CHRIS CLARKSON
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reduction and Retouch as Independent Measures of Intensity</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BROOKE BLADES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Perforation with Stone Tools and Retouch Intensity: A Neolithic Case Study</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COLIN PATRICK QUINN, WILLIAM ANDREFSKY, JR., IAN KUIJT, AND BILL FINLAYSON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Exploring the Dart and Arrow Dilemma: Retouch Indices as Functional Determinants</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHERYL HARPER AND WILLIAM ANDREFSKY, JR.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PART III: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON LITHIC RAW MATERIAL AND TECHNOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Projectile Point Provisioning Strategies and Human Land Use</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WILLIAM ANDREFSKY, JR.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Role of Lithic Raw Material Availability and Quality in Determining Tool Kit Size, Tool Function, and Degree of Retouch: A Case Study from Skink Rockshelter (46NI445), West Virginia</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DOUGLAS H. MACDONALD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Raw Material and Retouched Flakes</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANDREW P. BRADBURY, PHILIP J. CARR, AND D. RANDALL COOPER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PART IV: EVOLUTIONARY APPROACHES TO LITHIC TECHNOLOGIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lithic Technological Organization in an Evolutionary Framework: Examples from North America’s Pacific Northwest Region</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANNA MARIE PRENTISS AND DAVID S. CLARKE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Changing Reduction Intensity, Settlement, and Subsistence in Wardaman Country, Northern Australia</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHRIS CLARKSON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14 Lithic Core Reduction Techniques: Modeling Expected Diversity
NATHAN B. GOODALE, IAN KUIJT, SHANE J. MACFARLAN, CURTIS OSTERHOUĐT, AND BILL FINLAYSON

Index
In 1968 George Frison introduced the notion of artifact transformations as a result of use and resharpening. This “Frison Effect,” as it has come to be called, on stone tools can be viewed as the life histories of individual tools. Such life histories are intimately linked to tool production, use, and maintenance. This collection of chapters grew from presentations at a symposium entitled “Artifact Life-Cycle and the Organization of Lithic Technologies” that took place at the 71st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in 2006. The focus of that symposium and this volume is upon the relationship between the manner in which humans organize their lithic technology and the life history of lithic tools.

Researchers interested in lithic technological organization realize the importance of artifact life histories in understanding the intricacies of tool form and shape as they relate to production strategies for those tools. In an effort to better understand those relationships, lithic analysts (including contributors to this volume) have explored lithic reduction sequences, chaîne opératoire, tool curation, tool production effects, retouch measurements, and the role of lithic raw material as these relate to lithic technological organization and stone tool life history. A great deal of imaginative and compelling research has occurred since the Frison Effect was first recognized, and this collection of papers provides a fresh new look at all of these topics from both a methodological and a theoretical perspective.

I would like to thank all of the participants of the original symposium for their participation. For various reasons, not all symposium
participant chapters are included in this volume. Also, as chapters were reviewed, revised, and adjusted, some chapters gained authors and some authors contributed different written research. This blend of chapters captures opinions and ideas about lithic technology from some of the most respected scholars in the field today, but it also includes research from many young new researchers who will one day guide the field of lithic technology. It was a joy to bring this group together under a single cover. My best wishes go to all volume contributors and symposium participants.

I must also thank the team of editors and production staff from Cambridge University Press and their associated collaborators. In particular I thank Publishing Director Beatrice Rehl and her editorial assistant Tracy Steel for managing this book project. The production manager for Aptara, Inc., Maggie Meitzler, helped me navigate through the technical challenges of today’s high-tech world of publishing. William Stoddard was a fabulous copy editor. Lastly, I thank the Cambridge University Press peer reviewers for making important comments on the original draft.
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