



Archaeological Approaches to Technology

By Heather M. L. Miller

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This book is designed for upper-division undergraduate and graduate level archaeology students taking courses in ancient technologies, archaeological craft production, material culture, the history of technology, archaeometry, and field methods. This text can also serve as a general introduction and a reference for archaeologists, material culture specialists in socio-cultural disciplines, and engineers/scientists interested in the backgrounds and histories of their disciplines. The study of ancient technologies that is, the ways in which objects and materials were made and used can reveal insights into economic, social, political, and ritual realms of the past. This book summarizes the current state of ancient technology studies by emphasizing methodologies, some major technologies, and the questions and issues that drive archaeologists in their consideration of these technologies. It shows the ways that technology studies can be used by archaeologists working anywhere, on any type of society and it embraces an orientation toward the practical, not the philosophical. It compares the range of pre-industrial technologies, from stone tool production, fiber crafts, wood and bone working, fired clay crafts, metal production, and glass manufacture. It includes socially contextualized case studies, as well as general descriptions of technological processes. It discusses essential terminology (technology, material culture, chaine operatoire, etc.), primarily from the perspective of how these terms are used by archaeologists.

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