**EARLY BRONZE AGE FLINT ARTEFACTS FROM LESSER POLAND – USE-WEAR ANALYSIS OF SELECTED MATERIALS**

**Summary**

This dissertation is an attempt to define the economic role of flints, which are an important element of the total number of Early Bronze Age artefacts discovered on the loess areas of Lesser Poland. The above-mentioned purpose was to be achieved by using the traceological method, which was supposed to lead to the functional identification of the analysed implements. The undertaken microscopic observations – supported by experimental tests as well as by ethnographic data – allowed the interpretation of behaviour of agricultural communities inhabiting the area of Lesser Poland in the Early Bronze Age. In connection with this issue, the mode and scope of using flint have been examined. The present study is also aimed at exploring and understanding the phenomenon of technological dualism observed with tools. This specific dichotomy can be seen particularly clearly in European post-Neolithic chipped flint inventories, including the finds recorded in the loess area of Lesser Poland.

In the course of the study it has been recognised that macrolithic bifacial items characterised by enormous craftsmanship – especially sickles – differ from typical, occasionally produced ones from settlements not only technologically, but also functionally. It has been demonstrated that the aforementioned bifacial artefacts were used in connection with seasonal work: mainly while harvesting, but also – as it seems – during building tasks and/or plowing activities. The economic significance of simple flake forms – numerically dominant in materials dating back to the Early Bronze Age – was only temporary and limited to the use of tools for single and everyday tasks. Looking at the two trends evident in flint technology of Early Bronze Age communities, it has been concluded that this dichotomy could constitute a utilitarian kind of "hybrid", ensuring the efficient functioning of the economic system of that time.

Finally, this research aims to reconstruct the technological and functional biographies of macrolithical sickles, with particular attention paid to the most accurate identification possible of both the production stages of these tools and the various phases of their use and repairs.

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters, most of which contain methodological considerations as well as discussions on the possibility of selection of the most appropriate artefacts for the research presented here. Use-wear analysis of chipped flint materials and their interpretation are included in the last two parts of the work.

**Key words**: use-wear analysis, Early Bronze Age, Lesser Poland, flint technology, bifacial tools