

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC (IN ENGLISH)

In the publications devoted to the foundations of European civilization a vital role is attached to the process of formation of two culture complexes in the Early Neolithic: the Balkan-Danubian Complex and the Western Mediterranean Complex. The objective of the present project is to explain what cultural, economic, and social changes, taking place in the southern and western Balkans in the VIII–VIIth millennium BC, had led to the division of the Early Neolithic of this zone into the two above-mentioned complexes. So far research has concentrated first of all on registering the differences in ceramics: painted and incised in the Central-Eastern Balkans, and *impresso-cardium* in the western Balkans. The present project intends to emphasize investigations into technologies of lithic tools production, the provenance and circulation of lithic raw materials as a manifestation of – on the one hand – local cultural traditions, and – on the other hand – of interregional contacts. Lithic artefacts constitute an element shared by autochthonous cultures of pre-Neolithic hunters and foragers and allochthonous farmers and stock-breeders. For this reason they are vital for resolving the controversy between the hypotheses of local evolution and of migrations of Neolithic populations into Europe. The proposed project is a continuation of Polish investigations into the routes and models of neolithization of Europe. The relation of the Western Balkan zone to the Central Balkan zone was discussed in a pioneer publication of the stratigraphical sequence in the Odmut Cave in Montenegro (J.K. Kozłowski, S.K. Kozłowski, I.Radovanović 1994) where Mesolithic strata and Neolithic layers with painted pottery and *impresso-cardium* ceramics were registered. The study of the lithics from the site of Sidari on the island of Korfu (Mesolithic strata and layers with *impresso-cardium* ceramics – M. Kaczanowska, J.K. Kozłowski 2014a) as well as the monograph of the site of Mavropigi in Greek Macedonia where painted and *impresso-cardium* ceramics co-occurred (G.Karamitrou-Mentessidi, N. Efstratiou, M. Kaczanowska, J. K. Kozłowski 2015) concerned the same issues. Recently, a number of new sites were discovered in Croatia, Albania and Macedonia (FYROM) that evidenced dissimilarities of the Early Neolithic in the Western and in the Central Balkans. These sites are also vital for the realization of the project.

In addition to the study of archaeological materials from Early Neolithic sites carried out in cooperation with researchers from the countries mentioned above, also field surveys are to be conducted in the regions of lithic raw materials deposits, most importantly of siliceous rocks. The identification of raw materials from quarries, workshops and settlements (both Mesolithic and Early Neolithic) is to be done using geochemical, mineralogical-petrographic and paleontological methods.