

## ABSTRACT

This thesis presents the results of an analysis of stone artefacts from twelve open artefact scatters in the Selwyn Range, northwest central Queensland. A methodological and theoretical context for this study is outlined in chapter one. The majority approach to stone artefact analysis in Australia has been firmly entrenched in the culture/typology theoretical framework. The historical reasons for its dominance are discussed. It is suggested that while this approach has provided important insights into Australian prehistory, the resolution and quality of these insights can be improved and built upon by adopting a technological perspective embedded in risk-minimisation theory.

The specific aims of this thesis are set out in chapter two. The importance of establishing regional variation in the archaeological record is discussed in the context of a pan-continental theoretical framework for Australian archaeology. In this context and in view of the results of Hiscock's work at Lawn Hill, 400 kilometres northwest of the present research area, it is suggested that this study represents an opportunity to test chert artefacts from twelve assemblages from the Selwyn Range for technological attributes associated with the economics and mechanics of stone procurement. As the frequency of retouched flakes in assemblages is an important indicator of a rationing ethos a broken flake analysis is proposed to test whether or not this type of artefact was used as a tool and to establish if flakes were deliberately broken