



Origin processes of the emergence of warrior societies: from inter-group conflict in Prehistory to its social roots in Proto-history.

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Since Prehistory inter-group conflict is widely demonstrated in many areas. In the Epipaleolithic Kenya, remains of inter group violence has been discovered in Lake Turkana. In Volos'ke, in Epipaleolithic Ukraine, several number of violent death has been identified. In the LBK area in the Early Neolithic central Europe many examples of intergroup violence are now known in villages and collective graves; in the Iberian Levantine Neolithic some paintings in caves or rock-shelters show combats between groups of archers; in several parts of Continental Europe and in Great Britain osteo-archaeological analysis demonstrate that several individuals have been subjected to shocking evidence for violent assaults involving clubs, axes, and arrowshot, as for example in the mass grave of Eulau in Germany, dating to the Neolithic corded ware culture.

The argument that such events were not uncommon in human societies all over the world can be demonstrated easily by looking at ethnographic studies as, for example, on inter group violence in traditional societies from the Americas.

In Protohistoric Europe the “birth” of swords marks the appearance of the first artifacts designed exclusively as weapons of war, the flourishing of fortified settlements, especially at the end of Bronze Age, shows that the landscape is also characterized by the need for defense and control: with an ethnographic look the phenomenon of the territory organized in fortified and non-fortified settlements is also common to some traditional African cultures such as the Konso people or the Zulu kingdom. Again, the ability to organize ever more numerous groups of warriors is evident in the end of the Bronze Age in Northern Europe with the battlefield of the Tollense Valley. To this phenomenon of material evidence of the consolidation of warrior societies is added the rooting of the war in the symbolism of the elites: ostentation of weapons in funerary objects, recurrent representations in rock art, birth of the myths of the warrior heroes that flow into Iron Age.

The thematic session aims to analyze in a chronological scale, which goes from the Neolithic to the Iron Age, and in a geographical scale which wishes to embrace as many continents as possible, the phenomenon of the origins of inter-group violence in Late Prehistory, following the passage from the simple signs for intergroup violence to the first 'warfare' and the emerging of the warrior as 'figure', 'class', 'specialist' or as a founding element of several protohistoric societies. Through a common dialogue between specialists from several continents working in the field of pre-protohistoric archeology, ethno-archaeology, experimental archaeology and polemology the session wants to raise new questions on the proposed topic and give space for interdisciplinary discussions.