

# Foreword

The third LOEWE conference was held on September 24–27, 2018, in Fulda (Hesse) with the specific thematic topic “Materialisation of Conflicts”. Following the first two international annual conferences of our LOEWE focal project “Prehistoric Conflict Research”, which were held in Frankfurt a. M. (2016) and in Alba Iulia (2017), the central line of inquiry of the third LOEWE conference in 2018 was concerned with the conclusions that can be drawn from the material and archaeological remains of conflicts and the information that they provide. Further, to what extent can these material remains be documented at all, and what influence might such documentation exert upon our interpretations of warlike conflicts. In this regard various approaches were made and described in the specific case studies and discussed in theoretical perspectives.

## 1. Materialised preparation for conflict

The material preparations made for armed conflict were usually quite extensive: Weapons were produced and fortification measures were constructed or renewed, reserve provisions and armament were collected, etc. These preparatory steps were not limited to the production and improvement of objects alone; they also had social, cultural and economic consequences. The resultant discourse is manifested in various media, and military social structures were determinative in settlement arrangements or led to specific material cultural forms.

## 2. Materialisations in the course of conflict

Violence in armed conflicts is a specific form of social behaviour among the combatants as well as for third persons. The motives and effects thereof can vary greatly, yet violence is always aimed at inflicting lasting physical damage to humans and to objects. However, the material damages – whether intentional or not – that resulted from battles are not the sole possibility for materialising

the course of conflicts. Even in cases in which actual fighting did not occur, there were numerous living beings and other objects involved (troops, refugees, supply lines, etc.) that left behind visible, material traces as well. Further, the production and distribution of goods were affected during the course of conflict, for example, through the lack of workforces or materials, or due to changes in daily or other needs.

## 3. Materialised consequences of conflicts

In the aftermath of conflict the material consequences of preparations made prior to and the course of conflict present a great challenge for the participants involved. This pertains to, on the one hand, objects that were destroyed, damaged or taken away, while, on the other hand, to caring for wounded persons or animals and removing dead bodies. War booty also belongs to this context. In addition, there are often material consequences to conflicts, such as negotiating reparations or tributes, or changing the control of territories, which in turn could lead to far-reaching reactions in a material as well as an immaterial aspect. Especially noteworthy is the cultural challenge and reaction to conflict, as materialised – for example – in monuments and in socioeconomic changes.

## 4. Materialised symbolisation of conflicts

In addition to the aforementioned aspects of materialisation concerning actual phases of warlike confrontations, there is still an augmentative fourth aspect: In the course of human history conflict, battle and the willingness to fight have received diverse symbolisations that are reflected in material objects. The glorification of violence and historical myths chiselled in stone, images of war gods, monuments and emblems of heroes, commemorative stelae and posts, and representative weaponry not only allude to actual confrontations, but also reflect cultural interpretations of

violence and war. They legitimise enmities, signify defensibility and represent a primarily aggressive attitude and behaviour.

The third LOEWE conference was opened on September 24, 2018, by Daniel Köfer, council of the Hesse Ministry for Science and Art (HMWK). Participant colleagues from twelve countries reported on their research, in all 22 scientific papers. In closing, on the afternoon of September 26, 2018, two-hour panel discussion was held, which is also included in this volume of papers. We are very grateful to all colleagues for their participation.

We express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Andrea Streily for her thorough editorial processing of all papers and to Dr. Emily Schalk for English translations and proofreading. The publishing house Dr. Rudolf Habelt has in its well proven way assumed the publication of this volume, for which we extend our thanks to Dr. Susanne Biegert. We are grateful for the financial support of Open Access-Publication Funds from the university library of the Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a. M., which made this additional publication of the conference volume in open access possible.

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Information and conference-program:

[www.uni-frankfurt.de/praehistorische\\_Konfliktforschung](http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/praehistorische_Konfliktforschung) via “Events”

Open access publication of the 3rd LOEWE conference:

<https://nbn-resolving.org/urn/resolver.pl?urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:3-515307>

Excavations carried out in 2016–2018 in the Central German Mountains in Hesse and in Romania as part of the LOEWE project can be accessed online:

[www.uni-frankfurt.de/praehistorische\\_Konfliktforschung](http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/praehistorische_Konfliktforschung) via “Highlights”