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Summary of the doctoral dissertation entitled "Violence and war in the religion of the Lusatian and Pomeranian culture in Pomerania and their materializations"

The aim of this work is to attempt to identify the role that the phenomena mentioned in the title – violence and war – played in the spirituality of the Lusatian and Pomeranian cultures inhabiting Pomerania from the middle Bronze Age to the beginning of the Iron Age. The mythology and religion of these societies were fundamental values shaping their worldview, thus shaping their way of experiencing reality and their norms of behavior and values. The considerations presented in this work therefore constitute a proposal for reconstructing interconnected elements: mythical reality, religion, and rituals associated with armed conflict and military activity. War has accompanied humanity from almost its very beginning, and throughout history, it has left its mark on literature, art, and culture, as well as on religion.

The discussion in this work is based on a comparative approach, comparing available archaeological finds from Lusatian and Pomeranian cultures related to violence and warfare to similar phenomena from the Indo-European world. Comparing already known facts regarding ancient beliefs opens up the possibility of a better understanding of the societies of interest to archaeology, despite the differences in space and time that separate them. Historical, religious, and anthropological research has created an invaluable database, also relevant to the subject of this work. Violence and warfare played a significant role in the mythology and religious life of ancient societies. Despite the diversity of customs, rituals, and mythical traditions, it is possible to identify common traditions among them, likely shared by most Indo-European peoples. These traditions can be used to reconstruct the religion of societies that did not leave behind written records of their own religion. Assuming that the Lusatian and Pomeranian cultures belonged to the great family of Indo-European peoples, we can assume that they shared common beliefs about cosmology, gods, and heroes. We are naturally unable to directly reconstruct the content of the stories, the names of deities and heroes, the names of places, and the sound of hymns. However, recurring motifs in the sources allow for the creation of a kind of comparative framework, allowing for a comparative confrontation, utilizing the "silent" archaeological finds left by prehistoric communities. Archaeological finds – understood as elements of the world directly relating to mythical reality – can be related to theoretical frameworks known from the research results of other disciplines: anthropology, the history of religion, and religious studies. In this way, it will be possible to identify and understand those activities of Lusatian and Pomeranian cultural communities that can be related to the religious and mythological valorization of war.

The work consists of three main analytical and synthetic parts (Chapters 3–5). It begins (Chapter 1) with a discussion of the work's subject matter, key assumptions, and its territorial and

chronological scope. Chapter 2 outlines the sources and the state of reflection on the issue at the center of this study. Chapter 6 summarizes the research findings. The work is complemented by a bibliography, tabulated lists of archaeological sources, and a catalog of sites and finds. Maps constitute a significant part of the work. The main body of the work begins with a review of archaeological sources demonstrating the existence of organized violence in prehistory, from the Stone Age to the fall of the Western Roman Empire (Chapter 3). The next part (Chapter 4) reviews views prehistoric societies' perception of reality, the most important anthropological concepts on the sources of aggressive behavior and the propensity for war in human culture, as well as its role in the religions and mythologies of Indo-European peoples and in the rituals that emanate from them. The final section (Chapter 5) will be devoted to archaeological sources related to the thesis' topic. It will discuss finds related to ritual violence and their connections to mythical perceptions of the world, the social aspects of war, and the roles of those involved. It will also present the main tools of war: militaria – their symbolism and the context of deposition, which will serve as a basis for reconstructing their role in ritual and religion. This chapter will conclude with a review of the iconography of Pomeranian culture related to heroic burial.

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