

World's 'first war' was in Sudan 13,400 years ago

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A new study has led archaeologists to believe that the world's first war was in Sudan. Researchers from France and the UK have re-examined 61 human skeletons from a site at Jebel Sahaba in the Nile Valley in Northern Sudan. The skeletons are

13,400 years old and were uncovered in the 1960s. For decades, scientists believed the millennia-old humans were killed in a one-off massacre. New research on injuries sustained by the early humans revealed that they were killed during a longer war that took place over several years. The skeletons are now regarded as evidence of the earliest example of organized warfare between humans. Furthermore, the war was probably triggered by climate change.

The researchers conducted a deeper investigation into injuries on the skeletons found at Jebel Sahaba. The scientists said the injuries were as a result of weapons such as arrows and spears. They were likely sustained during a series of conflicts or battles over several decades. The researchers believe conflicts arose as rival tribes competed for food and water that were in limited supply because of dramatic changes in climate 11,000 to 20,000 years ago. At this time, ice covered a lot of the Northern Hemisphere. This caused flooding and major changes to the availability of farmland. A researcher said: "These changes were not gradual at all. People had to survive these changes, which were brutal."

Sources: cnn.com / newscientist.com / ancientorigins.net

Writing

Archaeology is a very important subject to study. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

study / archaeologists / war / skeletons / valley / massacre / humans / evidence / investigation / weapons / arrows / conflicts / food / water / changes / climate

True / False

- 1) The world's very first war was between Sudan and Egypt. T / F
- 2) Archaeologists did research on 61 skeletons found in the 1960s. T / F
- 3) Scientists once believed the ancient humans died in a single massacre. T / F
- 4) Scientists said the ancient war was started by changes in the climate. T / F
- 5) Scientists said the ancient humans were clubbed to death. T / F
- 6) Rival tribes competed with each other over money and gold. T / F
- 7) The article says at the time of the war, ice covered much of the Equator. T / F
- 8) A researcher said the changes in climate 20,000 years ago were gradual. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. believe | a. competing |
| 2. massacre | b. proof |
| 3. revealed | c. savage |
| 4. evidence | d. set off |
| 5. triggered | e. slaughter |
| 6. conducted | f. endured |
| 7. sustained | g. slow |
| 8. rival | h. regard as true |
| 9. gradual | i. carried out |
| 10. brutal | j. showed |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Sudan?
- b) What do you think about archaeology?
- c) What do you know about how humans lived 13,000 years ago?
- d) Why do humans go to war so often?
- e) What wars are going on at the moment?
- f) What will it take to end war forever?
- g) What would war have looked like 13,000 years ago?
- h) What triggers wars nowadays?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. 61 human skeletons from a site | a. a result of weapons |
| 2. killed in a one- | b. of organized warfare |
| 3. a longer war that took | c. availability of farmland |
| 4. the earliest example | d. a deeper investigation |
| 5. the war was probably triggered | e. at Jebel Sahaba |
| 6. researchers conducted | f. place over several years |
| 7. the injuries were as | g. competed for food |
| 8. sustained during a series | h. by climate change |
| 9. rival tribes | i. of conflicts or battles |
| 10. major changes to the | j. off massacre |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Would you like to be an archaeologist?
- How brutal would war have been thousands of years ago?
- Will there be water wars in the future?
- What was the worst war ever?
- How might climate change trigger wars in the future?
- In what ways might life have been better 13,000 years ago?
- What questions would you like to ask the archaeologists?

Spelling

- led socrsotgheaila to believe that
- examined 61 human ktnsloees
- killed in a one-off arssemac
- injuries suteindas by the early humans
- now regarded as eicdvnee
- probably retgdrgei by climate change
- changes, which were rbtlua
- enopaws such as arrows
- sdtuiasen during a series of conflicts
- rival btsire competed for food
- ice covered a lot of the Northern hiseHepemr
- These changes were not luraagd at all

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. b	5. d
6. i	7. f	8. a	9. g	10. c

Role Play

Role A – Cave Life

You think cave life was the best thing about live 10,000 years ago. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): no traffic, daily exercise or food.

Role B – No Traffic

You think no traffic was the best thing about live 10,000 years ago. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): cave life, daily exercise or food.

Role C – Daily Exercise

You think daily exercise was the best thing about live 10,000 years ago. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): no traffic, cave life or food.

Role D – Food

You think food was the best thing about live 10,000 years ago. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): no traffic, daily exercise or cave life.

Speaking – Ancient Living

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about ancient life at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| • Cave life | • Daily exercise |
| • Food | • Farming |
| • No traffic | • No 9-to-5 |
| • Family | • No Internet |

Answers – True False

1 F	2 T	3 T	4 T	5 F	6 F	7 F	8 F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.