

Publication

Early Neolithic executions indicated by clustered cranial trauma in the mass grave of Halberstadt

JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

ID 4493317

Author(s) Meyer, Christian; Knipper, Corina; Nicklisch, Nicole; Münster, Angelina; Kürbis, Olaf; Dresely, Veit; Meller, Harald; Alt, Kurt W.

Author(s) at UniBasel [Alt, Kurt](#) ; [Nicklisch, Nicole](#) ;

Year 2018

Title Early Neolithic executions indicated by clustered cranial trauma in the mass grave of Halberstadt

Journal Nature Communications

Volume 9

Number 1

Pages / Article-Number 2472

Mesh terms Adolescent; Adult; Aggression; Archaeology; Female; Germany; History, Ancient; Humans; Male; Violence; Warfare; Young Adult

The later phase of the Central European Early Neolithic witnessed a rise in collective lethal violence to a level undocumented up to this date. This is evidenced by repeated massacres of settled communities of the Linearbandkeramik (ca. 5600-4900bc), the first full farming culture in this area. Skeletal remains of several dozen victims of this prehistoric warfare are known from different sites in Germany and Austria. Here we show that the mass grave of Halberstadt, Germany, a new mass fatality site from the same period, reveals further and so far unknown facets of Early Neolithic collective lethal violence. A highly selected, almost exclusively adult male and non-local population sample was killed by targeted blows to the back of the head, indicating a practice of systematic execution under largely controlled conditions followed by careless disposal of the bodies. This discovery significantly increases current knowledge about warfare-related violent behaviour in Early Neolithic Central Europe.

Publisher Nature Research

ISSN/ISBN 2041-1723

URL <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-018-04773-w>

edoc-URL <https://edoc.unibas.ch/68009/>

Full Text on edoc Available;

Digital Object Identifier DOI 10.1038/s41467-018-04773-w

PubMed ID <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29941965>

ISI-Number WOS:000436083700014

Document type (ISI) Historical Article, Journal Article