The Women Among the Others. Some Insights Regarding Women's Status in Eneolithic Society Based on Evidence from Sultana-Malu Roșu Cemetery (Romania)

Abstract:

This paper focuses on Eneolithic female burials discovered in the Sultana-Malu Roşu cemetery (c. 5000–4000 cal. BC), in order to set constants and variables that define the women's status in those past communities. The targeted cemetery is located in southeastern Romania, in the proximity of two settlements (Boian and Gumelnița) that have used it apparently continuous for more than 900 years. The 99 inhumation graves identified until now were grouped on the terrace edge and along the slopes of Mostiştea Lake high terrace. The graves contain a minimum number of individuals (MNI) of 104 individuals, and it represents a substantial group that is suitable to analyse the current study. Thus, our analysis will focus on the investigation of women's burials in relation to funerary rituals (e.g., body positions, orientations, grave structures, grave goods and offerings), the spatial location of the burials in the cemetery (GIS analysis), correlated with palaeodemographic and anthropological data. Each of these elements is a potential active representation of special treatment that may have been applied to females and could, therefore, be interpreted as a reflection of the individual identity alongside with the collective status assigned by the family or community. Moreover, differentiation between female burials and other graves, but also variation between Boian and Gumelnița graves, will also be explored by current paper.

Keywords: *Eneolithic, Cemetery, Graves, Skeletons, GIS.*