Place of Death and Place of Rest. Commingled Human Remains from Alba Iulia-Lumea Nouă 2015 Early Eneolithic Funerary Discovery

Abstract:

Continuing residential development of the area necessitated a rescue excavation at the Lumea Nouă site in August and September 2015. This paper introduces the results from the archaeological excavation, and the osteological analysis undertaken on human material recovered from a burial pit discovered during excavation. Initial analysis of the burial sequence in the pit shows deposition of single, disarticulated skeletal elements, articulated limbs detached from the rest of the body, and articulated whole bodies. The human material from the burial pit at Lumea Nouă 2015, currently comprises 16 individuals. There are seven adults; three females aged 40-45+, two males aged between 17 and 30 years old, and two individuals of indeterminate sex aged between 17 and 35 years old. There are one adolescent (<18 years), two nine year olds, one six year old and one 4 year old. There are also one adolescent, a three year old, a one year old and a perinate (near birth or new-born), along with various un-associated skeletal elements. Blunt force trauma to the skull – single and multiple impact zones – was observed in nine of the skeletons (unhealed fractures). Using a Bayesian analysis, we have modelled the dates from Pit 1 – Trench II/2015, which suggests a time frame of around 4400 BC: Start 4691-4372 BC (95.4%), mean 4512 BC; End 4456-4186 BC (95.4%), mean 4352 BC. It is believed that the human remains from the Pit 1 (Trench II/2015) were deposited around this time.

Keywords: *osteological analysis, commingled human remains, Alba Iulia-Lumea Nouă, Early Eneolithic.*