

GABRIEL BĂLAN and COLIN P. QUINN, Radiocarbon Data of Funerary Discoveries from Middle Bronze Age Settlement at Micești–Cigaș (Alba County, Romania)

Abstract: In the autumn of 2013 fragments of human bone were selected to date the burials in C.7/2009 and C.11/2012 at Micești-*Cigaș*. The dating of bone collagen provides an accurate means of dating the death of the individual. Radiocarbon dates from bone collagen also are unaffected by the ‘old wood’ phenomenon that can affect conventional charcoal dates. They were calibrated with the Oxcal program, version 4.2.3, resulting a timeframe between 1745-1627 BC (95.4%) / 1736-1645 BC (68.1%) for C.11 and 1880-1693 BC (95.4%) / 1872-1700 BC (68.1%) for C.7. Until now there were only 6 radiocarbon dates obtained on samples taken from Wietenberg sites: Oarța de Sus (two dates: 1. Ly 9190 - „1610-1445 B.C., with maximum probability between 1589-1518-1469 B.C.”; 2. Bln 5626: 3507±37, 1931-1701 BC 2 sigma calibrated); Sighișoara-*Cartierul viilor* (1685 – 1524 BC) and Rotbav-*La pârauț* (three dates: Hd-28203 - 3547±24 BP, 1954- 1774 BC calibrated 2 sigma; Hd-27967 - 3195±19 BP, 1501-1430 BC calibrated 2 sigma; Hd-27989 - 3174±16 BP, 1497-1416 BC calibrated 2 sigma).

A partial chronological synchronization between the Wietenberg IV phase and Noua culture has been observed by several scholars. To test this, we draw attention to important radiocarbon dates from sites belonging to Noua culture: Mahala, Crasnaleuca, Miciurin-*Odaia* and Rotbav-*La pârauț*. These radiocarbon dates minimally and definitively place the Noua culture between 1500-1200 BC. There are also some other dates which could suggest the beginning of Noua culture in the 16th century BC.

On the basis of the radiocarbon dates belonging to Wietenberg and Noua cultures mentioned above, we consider that the Wietenberg IV phase is part of the Middle Bronze Age, while the beginning of the Late Bronze Age is marked through the presence of Noua culture in Transylvania. If we are to take into account the dates from Micești, the first manifestations of the last Wietenberg phase can be placed by the beginning of the 17th century BC. The final part of Wietenberg culture is marked by the emergence of Noua culture before 1500 BC, when, for a short period of time, the two pottery styles coexist.

Keywords: Middle Bronze Age, Wietenberg culture, funerary discoveries, 14C data, chronology

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