

GABRIEL BĂLAN, Deviant Burials of Wietenberg Culture at Micești–Cigaș (Alba County, Romania)

Abstract: The site from Micești – *Cigaș* is on the right terrace of Ampoi River tributary to Mureș. The archaeological excavations carried out since 1999, revealed the existence of a complex site with settlements which can be dated to the Copper Age (Coțofeni culture), Early Bronze Age (Gornea-Orlești/Iernut group), Middle Bronze Age (Wietenberg culture), Late Bronze Age (Cugir-Band group), First Iron Age (Gáva and Basarabi cultures), Second Iron Age (the 1st century BC – 1st century AD) and Early Medieval Age (the end of 9th – first half of the 10th centuries). In this paper I present three features dated in Middle Bronze Age, Wietenberg culture, discovered during rescue excavations in 2009 and 2012.

On the bottom of these features (C.7/2009, C. 56/2009 and C.11/2012) were inhumed skeletons in crouched position. In these pits, near the skeletons, cups dated to the IVth phase of the Wietenberg culture were discovered as grave goods. In the pit deposit of feature C.7/2009 we found many sherds typical for the last phase of this culture. Many burials in Wietenberg settlements are known: Derșida, Bernadea, Micești – *Valea luncii*, Obreja, Păuleni, Tureni (inhumation burials), Derșida, Ațel, Sânnicoară – *Lab*, Laslea – *Cariera de nisip*, Sântimbru, Rotbav – *La pârâuț*, Mihai Viteazul and Uioara de Jos (incineration burials). Burials in settlements were also practiced in other neighbouring Bronze Age cultures: Monteoru, Otomani, Periam-Pecica (Mureș) and Verbicioara. This type of burial behaviour was included by scholars in the so - called *deviant burial / atypical burial / Sonderbestattung / Irreguläre Bestattung*. All these terms refer to the same kind of features.

Keywords: deviant burial, inhumation burial, Middle Bronze Age, Wietenberg culture, settlement

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