

**AN ASPECT OF THE RITUAL-FUNERAL PRACTICES
FROM THE EPONYMIC SETTLEMENT AT BABADAG**

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It is well-known that within the area of the Thracian Culture belonging to Babadag type no necropolis was found, not even isolated tombs which could certify the practice of some funeral rites.

On the other hand, certain settlements belonging to Babadag Culture, that is Satu Nou, Valea lui Voicu (Constanța County), Garvăn-Mlăjitul Florilor, Niculițel-Cornet and Babadag (Tulcea County), entire or parts of human skeletons were found in various contexts.

The purpose of this paper is to emphasize the most frequent ritual practice, regarding the crouched skeletons discovered in truncated-cone shaped pits. The most recent finding of this series was made during the campaign of 1996 in the settlement from Babadag. Thus, in the pavement of a surface dwelling, placed on the last but one level of inhabitation (8th century BC - Babadag III Phase), a truncated-cone shaped pit was discovered, in which a strongly crouched skeleton was found, with the knees bent in front of the pelvis and the hands under the head. The walls and the bottom of the pit were burnt. Near the pelvis and the legs there were laid stone slabs and fragments of a bi-truncated-cone vase, having the exterior surface of black colour, polished.

The inventory also contains a valve of clay pattern for arrow tips. This finding was not singular in the settlement from Babadag, but its importance consists in all the aspects connected with the ritual character (the purification of the pit through burning, the breaking of a vase over the defunct, the covering of the body with stones, the clean earth from the filling). These ritual funeral practices have obvious analogies especially within the areal of Sabatinovka-Solonceni Culture (the findings from Hlingenî), as well as within Gáva Culture (the findings from Teleac), replacing the lack of the necropoleis. This phenomenon is almost general for the Early and Middle Hallstatt period.