CONCERNING THE BURIALS FROM THE EARLY IRON AGE SETTLEMENT BUCU – *POCHINĂ*, IALOMIȚA COUNTY

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Abstract: Archaeological investigations at the site from Bucu – *Pochină* carried out between 1989 and 2010 have highlighted the existence of an Early Iron Age settlement that can be ascribed to the Babadag culture (end of 9th c. – beginning of 8th c. BC). A series of four habitation structures containing the bones of five individuals were found there. In this article we have endeavoured to explore these situations as indepth as possible, presenting the archaeological materials and documentation and completing the anthropological analysis of three of the individuals buried in this site.

The study of the Bucu burials adds to the data known so far about the dead deposed in settlements in the Early Iron Age in the northern Balkans, especially in the Lower Danube region. The finds in this site consolidate the idea that these practices existed all over the area ascribed to the Babadag culture, as well as the diversity of archaeological contexts, considering the various types of set-up, number and state of representation of the dead, deposition practices and association with certain objects (pottery vessels and fragments, animal bones, construction remains).

Keywords: Early Iron Age, Babadag culture, burials in settlements, Lower Danube, blunt force trauma.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the Early Iron Age at the Lower Danube became known especially due to researches at Babadag settlement[1]. Since the end of the '80s, the interest of specialists in this period has been rising significantly, and new archaeological

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[1] Morintz 1964; Morintz 1986; Morintz 1987; Morintz, Jugănaru 1995; Morintz, Jugănaru, Munteanu 1995.

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excavations started in sites like Niculiţel[2], Satu Nou[3], Bucu[4], Garvăn[5], Siliştea[6], Enisala[7], Revărsarea[8], Ţibrinu[9], Telița[10], Jijila[11], etc. These new investigations brought substantial contributions to our knowledge of the communities that lived in the Lower Danube region in the early 1st millennium BC[12].

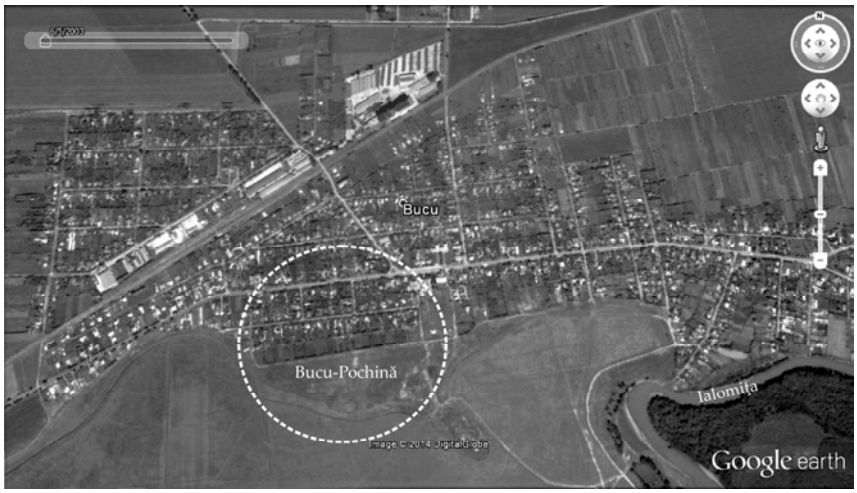

Fig. 1. Bucu – *Pochină* site, Ialomiţa County.

One of the most interesting aspects of the period concerns the funerary practices. In overall, the Early Iron Age in the Carpathian-Danubian region exhibited a categorical shift in funerary practices, as the number of burials radically dropped compared to the previous period[13]. The necropolises identified so far in the above-mentioned areal are scarce, contain a limited number of individuals and exhibit rather various rites and rituals[14]. The overall image of the attitude towards the dead was

[2] Topoleanu, Jugănaru 1995.
[3] Irimia, Conovici 1993.
[4] Renţa 2008.
[5] Jugănaru 1997.
[6] Harţuche, Anastasiu 1992; Sîrbu, Pandrea 1994.
[7] Lăzurcă, Mănucu-Adameşteanu 1984; Ailincăi, Constantinescu 2008; Ailincăi *et alii* 2011; Ailincăi, Mihail, Constantinescu 2013.
[8] Simion 2003; Ailincăi 2013a.
[9] Ailincăi, Dobrinescu 2006.
[10] Baumann 1995; Ailincăi 2010a.
[11] Sîrbu, Ailincăi, Simion 2008.
[12] Ailincăi 2013a; Ailincăi 2013b.
[13] Vulpe 2008, p. 269 et seq.
[14] See, for instance, the necropolises or isolated burials from: Bobda, Ticvanul Mare, Caransebeş – Balta Sărată, Moldova Nouă – *Cariera de banatite*, Hinova (Gumă 1993, p. 168 et seq.), Balta Verde, Bistreţ, Damian, Salcia, Sărata, Vârtop (Berciu 1939; Berciu, Comşa 1956; Chicideanu 1986; Chicideanu 1999–2001; Hänsel 1976), Zimnicea (Alexandrescu 1977), Sboryanovo (Stoyanov 1997), Meri (Moscalu

partially completed after the research and publication of new finds that point to the existence of practices of deposition, exposure and manipulation of human bodies in settlements, most often using deallocated habitat structures (pits or dwellings). Such situations are encountered all over the Lower and Middle Danube region, in different cultural areas, but concentrate mostly in the settlements ascribed to the Babadag culture[15].

In fact, in most EIA settlements at the Lower Danube where extended investigations were carried out, such set-ups containing human bones were found. This is also the case of the site at Bucu – *Pochină*, Ialomița County. The site was identified over an approx. 8 hectares area in the S-SW of Ialomița River (Fig. 1). Begun in 1989, the archaeological investigations coordinated by E. Renţa, continued until 2010, bringing to light settlements from various historical ages[16]. Amongst them, the EIA settlement, ascribed to the Babadag culture, stands out through its numerous surface dwellings, huts and pits of various uses, some of them containing human bones[17] (Fig. 2).

COMPLEXES WITH HUMAN BONES. CATALOGUE OF THE FINDS

From Bucu – *Pochină* site we have information on four archaeological complexes containing human bones, three of them already mentioned in the specialised literature[18]:

1. During the 1989 campaign, in S I, located east of the investigated area, a pit (Pit 1) was identified; for its complete excavation, area C-A was drawn. In the filling, a human skull was found (*individual 1*)[19]. The pit contained a few atypical EIA pottery fragments.

2. Pit 1, S XVIII/2005 was excavated up to the depth of 2.30 m. Its upper part was oval-shaped, of 1.60 m maximum diameter, and its lower part was circular, 3.80 m in diameter. The complex was partially affected by the setup of a hut dated to 4th–3rd c. BC, as well as by another pit dug in its western side during the Getae period.

1976, p. 77–86; Moscalu 1977–1979, p. 163–169), Cucorăni, Trifeşti, Vaslui – *Curtea Domnească*, Cotu Morii – *Toloaca*, Iaşi – *Crucea lui Ferenţ*, Volovăţ, Branişte (László 1994; László 2003), Prăjeni (Ursulescu, Şandurschi 2004, p. 45–56), Folteşti (László 1986; László 2006), Hansca (Levițki 1994), Alcedar, Climăuții de Jos, Poiana, Mateuți, Mihuleni, Saharna – *Dealul Mănăstirii*, Saharna – *Gura Hulboca*, Saharna – *Țiglău*, Țarevka (Kašuba 2000; Niculiță, Nicic 2014), etc.

[15] Ailincăi 2008a. This observation may be due to the current state of research. It is possible that the future archaeological excavations bring forth new data about this phenomenon.

[16] Păunescu, Renţa 1993, p. 193–197; Păunescu, Renţa 1994, p. 9; Păunescu, Renţa 1996, p. 16; Păunescu, Renţa 1998, p. 10; Păunescu, Renţa 1999, p. 18; Păunescu, Renţa 2000, p. 21; Renţa 2002, p. 70–71; Renţa 2003, p. 63–64; Renţa 2004, p. 62; Renţa, Coman 2005, p. 83–84; Renţa, Coman 2006, p. 98–100; Renţa, Munteanu 2007, p. 85–87; Renţa, Munteanu, Coman 2008, p. 57–58.

[17] The EIA finds from Bucu are described in detail in Renţa 2008.

[18] Renţa 2008, p. 75 et seq.

[19] The skull was handed in for analysis, shortly after it was found, to Mrs. Laurenţia Georgescu (who worked at "F.I. Rainer" Institute of Anthropology and at the National History Museum of Romania, Bucharest), but it was lost before the anthropological analysis could be performed.

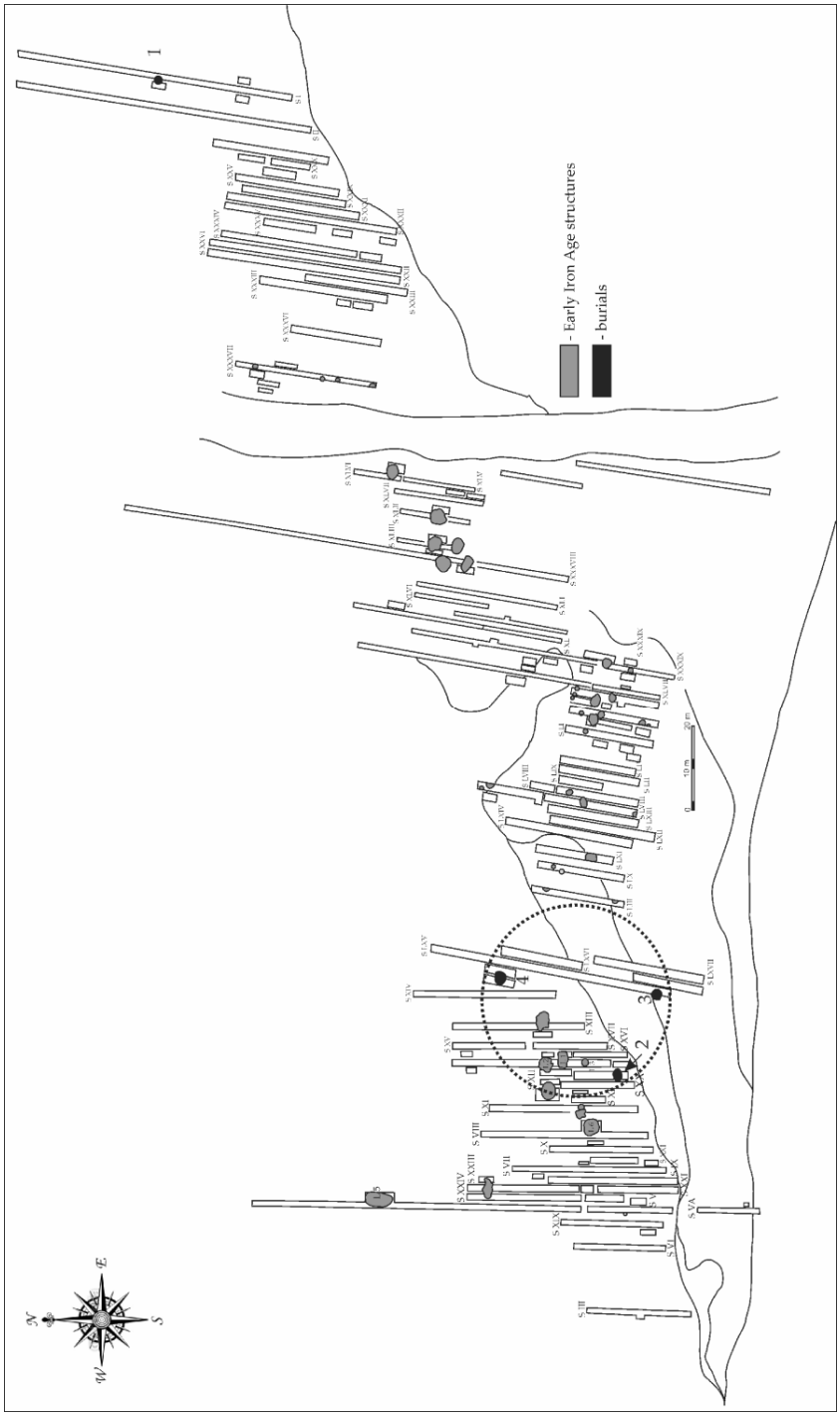

Fig. 2. Layout of archaeological investigations at the site from Bucu – *Pochină*, Ialomiţa County (after Renţa 2008).

At 1.75–2.00 m depth, in the pit's filling, in the central area, over a surface of approx. 1m in diameter, a hard earth layer of greyish black colour was dug out. Underneath it laid a female skeleton (*individual 2*), aged 33–46, in a flexed position on the left side, aligned NNE-SSW. The skull, arms, part of the ribs, and one tibia had been preserved in anatomical position (Fig. 3). The rest of the bones, and several pottery fragments from a single kitchenware item (Fig. 4/1) were recovered from the above-mentioned Getae pit[20].

A small vessel was found near the individual's left arm (Fig. 4/15). In addition to these objects, the pit also contained animal bones, lumps of adobe and numerous EIA pottery fragments (Fig. 4).

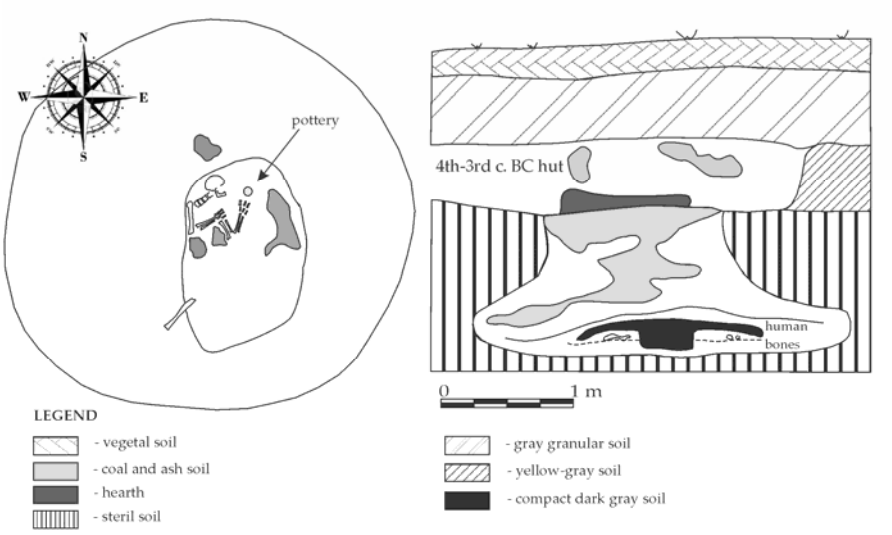

Fig. 3. Layout and profile of pit 1, S XVIII (after Renţa 2008).

3. Pit 1, S LXV/2006 was discovered near the margin of the current terrace, it was 1.35 m deep, with oval-shaped opening (1.45 × 1.65 m) and base (2.40 × 2.60 m). The upper part of the complex was covered with grayish-yellowish dust, up to 0.25 m thick, which probably appeared after construction of a kiln in Late Iron Age. Under this level, the earth that filled the pit was loose and contained ash, coal, adobe, fragments of hearth and animal bones, as well as several EIA pottery fragments from which a coarse paste kitchenware item was recovered and restored (Fig. 5/8). Close to the bottom of the pit, under a packed earth lens (approx. 10 cm thick), a human skeleton (*individual 3*) was found in anatomical position, deposited flexed, on its left side, head to SE[21].

[20] Renţa 2008, p. 75–76.

[21] Renţa 2008, p. 76, Fig. 7/1, 24/1, 99/1. The human bones from this complex were handed over to colleague C. Muja for study, but could not be retrieved afterwards for analysis.

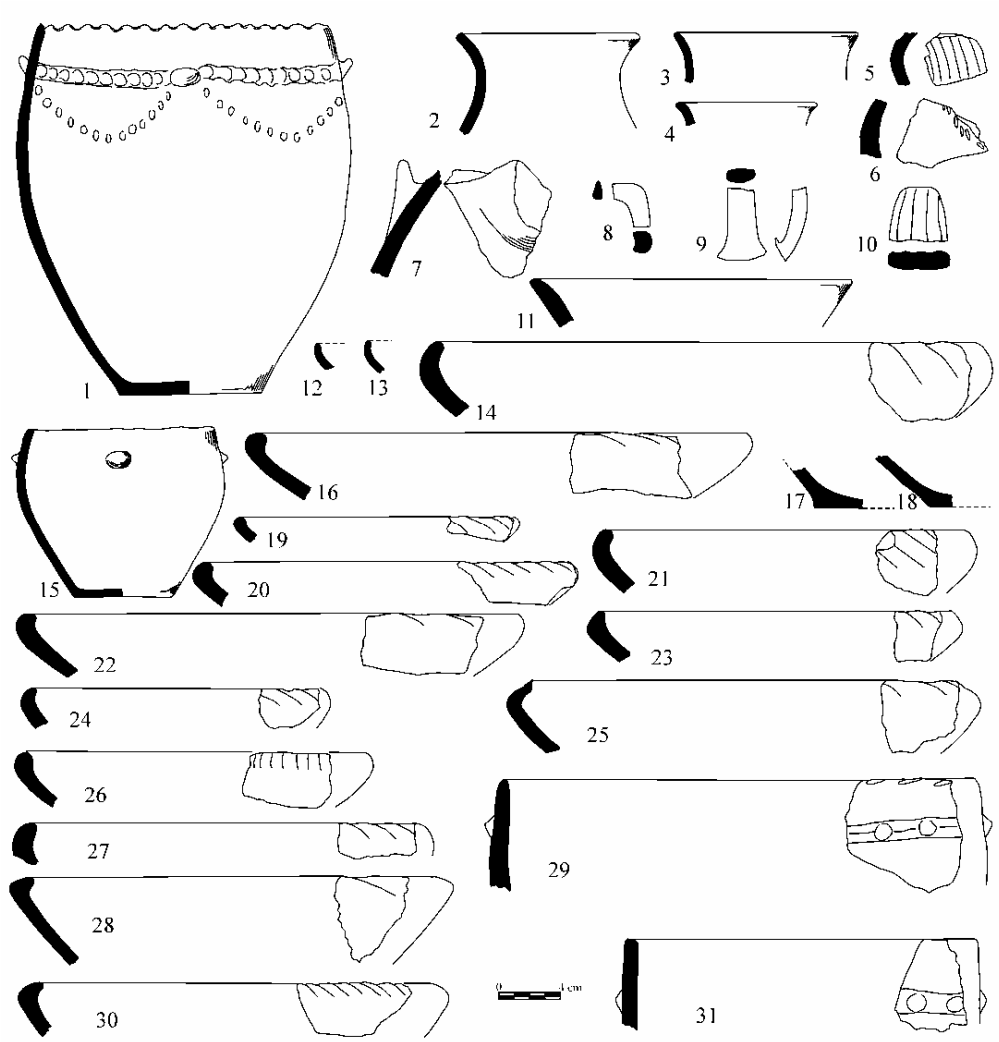

Fig. 4. Pottery found in pit 1, S XVIII.

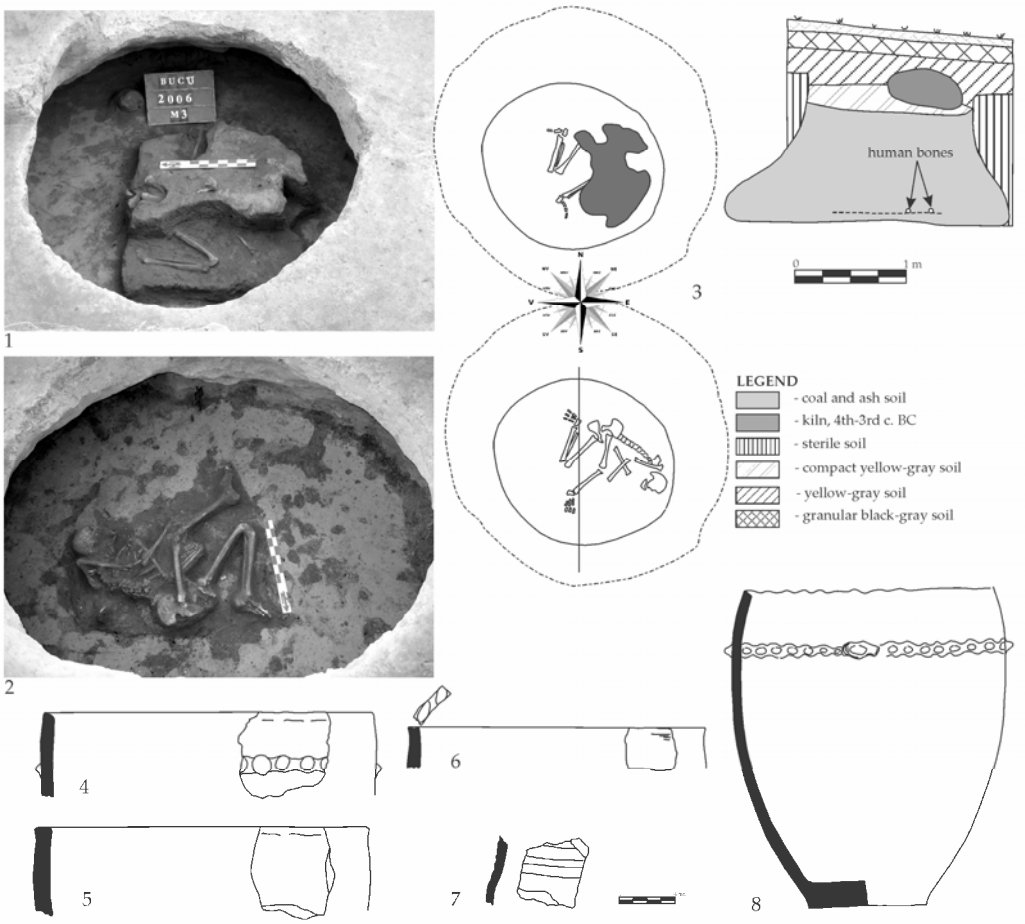

Fig. 5. Pit 1, S LXV / 2006.

4. Hut 12, S LXV was investigated in 2006–2007. It was approx. circular in shape (3.30 × 3.10 m) and was dug up to 0.40 m deep. Two human skeletons were found (numbered M4 and M5, respectively, by the authors of the research) here. The first individual (*individual 4*, female, aged 39.4 to 45) was deposited in supine position, aligned NE-SW, hands close to the body and the lower right limb strongly flexed from the knee. The second individual (*individual 5*, male, aged 33 to 46) was deposited on the left side, aligned SE-NW, leg bones slightly bent from the knee, left arm flexed from the elbow and hand bones at head level, while the right arm was at some distance from the body[22] (Fig. 6).

[22] Renţa 2008, p. 76–77, Fig. 22/3; 26/1.

Fig. 6. Bucu – *Pochină*, hut no. 12.

ANALYSIS OF THE FINDS

Place of deposition

In the layout of the archaeological research at Bucu (Fig. 2) we can see various areas of concentrated habitat structures (pits and dwellings) from the Early Iron Age. In relation to them, three of the burials (cat. no. 2–4) are situated in the western sector of the investigated area, with several hut-like dwellings, while the pit with the human skull (cat. no. 1) is somewhat isolated from the EIA traces of inhabitation, to the northeast. Like in other settlements, we noticed a special area intended for the deposition of the human bodies[23].

[23] Ailincăi 2008a.

Out of the four recorded situations, the human bodies or parts thereof (the skull) were deposited in relatively large pits in three of the cases, and in a hut, in another case. The pits (at least the two graphically documented pits, Fig. 3; 5/3) were dug so that the diameter of the lower part was larger than the upper part. This is a specific characteristic of the structures set up for storage of food supplies[24]. It's interesting that the archaeological material found in the filling of these pits is rather diverse: pottery sherds (Fig. 3; 4/4–8), stones, adobe, animal bones (Table 1), etc., mostly fragmented. Such cases are frequent at the Lower Danube, in settlements such as Babadag, Enisala, Niculițel, Suceveni or Satu Nou[25].

Deposition of human bodies in dwelling-like structures[26] is scarcer. Such situations, however, have been encountered at the Lower Danube in sites such as Niculițel – *Cornet*[27], Jurilovca–*Orgame*[28] or Enisala – *Palanca*[29], considered places intended for deposition/decomposition of the bodies – houses of the dead[30].

Complete and partial bodies

The various state of representation of the bodies has repeatedly drawn our attention to such finds: complete skeletons in anatomical position, parts of bodies, or fragmented bones. At the settlement from Bucu, most of the skeletons of the five individuals are almost complete, preserving their anatomical position, except for the remains of *individual 2*, disturbed post deposition, and the skull deposited in pit 1, SI (cat. no. 1). The anatomic position of these individuals indicates possible primary deposition in these complexes or at least within a shorter period of time than necessary for joints to decay. The absence of some of the bones or the abnormal position of some of them could be the result of the body disposal, soil pressure, subsequent deliberate or unintentional interventions, of the moves occurred during decomposition or of the natural decay of some of the smaller bones, etc.[31]

Regarding the deposition of skulls, we take note that such cases have multiplied. To this effect, we need to mention the four skulls without mandibles deposited in the filling of a pit dug outside the fortification from Babadag[32], or at

[24] See for example Frere-Sautot 2006.

[25] See Ailincăi 2008a.

[26] Numerous lumps of adobe with twigs and reed impressions (remains of the overstructure – walls, roof) were found in these set-ups, bringing an argument in favour of considering them dwelling-like structures.

[27] Topoleanu, Jugănaru 1995; Ailincăi 2008b.

[28] Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2003; Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2006.

[29] Ailincăi, Constantinescu forthcoming.

[30] Ailincăi 2013b, p. 235 et seq.

[31] Duday 1995, p. 36 et seq.

[32] Jugănaru, Ailincăi 2003; Ailincăi *et alii* 2006.

the base of the *vallum* at Jijila settlement, where we found a skull and a femur[33]. Depositions of skulls have also been identified on some of the platforms/floors at Garvăn – *Mlăjitul Florilor*[34] and Satu Nou – *Valea lui Voicu*[35], to which we can add the find of a skull with mandible in a pit at Niculiţel – *Cornet*[36] and of some whole or fragmentary mandibles in pits at Babadag, Garvăn – *Mlăjitul Florilor*[37] and Revărsarea – *Dealul Tichileşti*[38]. We believe that the deposition only of parts of a body is deliberate, and the rest of the body parts received different treatment (incineration, inhumation in other places, preservation in dwellings or simply abandonment). We can also explain in this way the finds of isolated bones, especially skulls and limbs. Unarticulated bones depositions are certainly the result of secondary actions applied *peri-* or *postmortem* on the bodies, representing complicated multi-stage treatment measures.

Data on the number of individuals

In a recent analysis of the finds, we noticed that the number of individuals deposited in a complex varies from case to case[39]. We found the most spectacular situation at Jurilovca–*Orgame*, where we identified the bones of no less than 15 individuals[40]. From the analyzed materials[41], in three of the complexes at Bucu one individual was deposited in each, and two individuals were deposited only in hut 12 (cat. no. 4).

Placed or thrown?

Unlike other situations documented so far, most of the human osteological remains found in the EIA settlement from Bucu were on the bottom or very close to the bottom of the set-ups, except for the skull in pit 1/S I (cat. no. 1), which was in the filling. This suggests certain concern for preparing a special place for the deposition of the bodies, or the change in use of some of the structures put up for habitat or storage.

In the overall finds from Bucu, complexes numbered 2 and 3 in the catalogue hold a special place. In these two cases, the dead were deposited in

[33] Sîrbu, Ailincăi, Simion 2008.
[34] Jugănaru 1997; Jugănaru 2005; Ailincăi 2008a.
[35] Irimia, Conovici 1993; Irimia 2003.
[36] Ailincăi 2008b.
[37] Ailincăi 2008a.
[38] Ailincăi 2010a; Ailincăi 2013a.
[39] Ailincăi 2008a.
[40] Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2003; Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2006.
[41] We need to point out that the fauna found at the site from Bucu was not analysed, therefore it is possible it contains human bones, too.

anatomical position, probably on the bottom of the pits, in the central area. The flexed position of the bodies (both on the left), the whole vessels (Fig. 4/1, 15; 5/80) and the layers of packed earth noticed above the skeletons point out to the existence of special practices that accompanied these depositions. Proofs of such rituals are also documented in other cases in Babadag culture areal. In this respect we can mention the collective burial from Suceveni – *Stoborăni*, where the author of the investigation indicated that the bodies were found in a layer of ash mixed with adobe, along with a bovid skull[42]. Another suggestive case in this regard is the collective burial from Jurilovca–*Orgame*, where an ash layer was above the bodies, containing fragments from approx. 80 vessels, animal bones, a human humerus and a coxal bone. A similar situation was indicated in pits 41, 43, 44 and 46 from Satu Nou – *Valea lui Voicu*[43], as well as Niculițel – *Cornet*[44] or Babadag[45].

Unlike these two cases, the position in which *individuals 4* and *5* were found on the floor of hut 12 (cat. no. 4) does not denote special attention given to the placement of the dead. In fact, in these dwellings that we consider special set-up places for the deposition of the bodies[46], the position, alignment and state of representation of the individuals is diverse, as also visible in the finds from Niculițel – *Cornet*[47] and Jurilovca–*Orgame*[48]. The skull from pit 1/S I found in the filling is also a special case, as it seems it was "thrown in".

Regarding the alignment of the dead, though we cannot consider it a standard, not long ago we noticed that NNW-SSE, NW-SE and E-W depositions are the exclusive characteristic of the skeletons in supine position, and NNE-SSW, SSW-NNE and SW-NE alignments exclusively apply to the bodies deposited in a flexed position. However, we underline that the most frequent alignment for both body positions is N-NE[49].

ANTHROPOLOGICAL DATA

State of conservation and representation

Unfortunately, due to events independent of our will, we could only analyze the osteological remains of *individuals 2, 4* and *5*[50]. Their skeletons are very well

[42] Dragomir 1996; Ailincăi, Constantinescu, Adamescu 2014.
[43] Irimia, Conovici 1993, p. 53, 89, 91, 94.
[44] Topoleanu, Jugănaru 1995, p. 204–205; Ailincăi 2008b.
[45] Jugănaru 2005, p. 33.
[46] Ailincăi 2008a; Ailincăi 2013b.
[47] Ailincăi 2008b.
[48] Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2003; Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2006.
[49] Ailincăi 2013a. Our analysis included the finds from Bucu.
[50] To this effect, see notes 19 and 21.

preserved[51]. The state of representation[52] of the bones is optimal, given that only small bones are missing (in general, small bones from the rib cage, bones of the hands and feet). It's very likely that these missing bones are due to incomplete gathering of the bones from the site and not to intended selection of the deposited bones.

For *individual 2* (cat. no. 2), all broken and missing bones are recent. So is the case of *individual 4*, whose most fractures are recent (occurring during the onsite investigation and/or storage). Only parts of the crania, ribs, proximal and distal thirds of the femur, tibia and fibula diaphyses are fragmented due to pressure of the soil. Most of the fragmentations of *individual 5* are also of recent occurrence; only parts of the frontal bone (affected by violent trauma, see below "Signs of violent death"), some ribs, ilia and the distal third of the left tibia diaphysis are fragmented due to soil pressure.

Part of the missing bones in the skeleton of *individual 5* seems to be the result of a special funerary treatment. As shown in the photo taken on the site, the bones of the right arm are not in connection with the rest of the body. They were found at approx. 0.50–1m distance from their anatomical position. The humerus, forearm bones and the hand bones are, however, articulated (Fig. 6). The right arm was probably separated perimortem from the body and deposited near it, which would explain the absence of right clavicle and scapula. This treatment can also explain the missing distal thirds of the right ulna and radius. The absence of right hand metacarpals seems to be related to the gathering of the bones from the site, while the proximal and medial phalanges are only partially preserved.

Table 1

Bucu. Sex, age, stature and inventory (stature estimated after Bach 1965)

Bucu	Sex	Age	Stature (cm)	Other materials
Ind. 2	F	33–46	-	3 animal bone fragments; 3 snail shells; adobe fragments.
Ind. 4	F	39.4–45	-	6 animal bone fragments.
Ind. 5	M	33–46	160.36±4.8	One pig ankle bone showing signs of usage (polished) on the sides; one pottery fragment; adobe fragments.

The bones show few taphonomic changes[53]. Especially small parts of the surface of the long bones exfoliated due to prolonged exposure to the sun during the excavation.

[51] Connell, Rauxloh 2003, p. 2; Connell 2008, p. 9.
[52] Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 19.
[53] Stodder 2008, p. 71–114.

All analyzed skeletons belong to adult individuals aged 33 to 46[54], two females and one male[55] (Table 1). One of the female skeletons, *individual 4*, also shows pronounced signs of parturition[56].

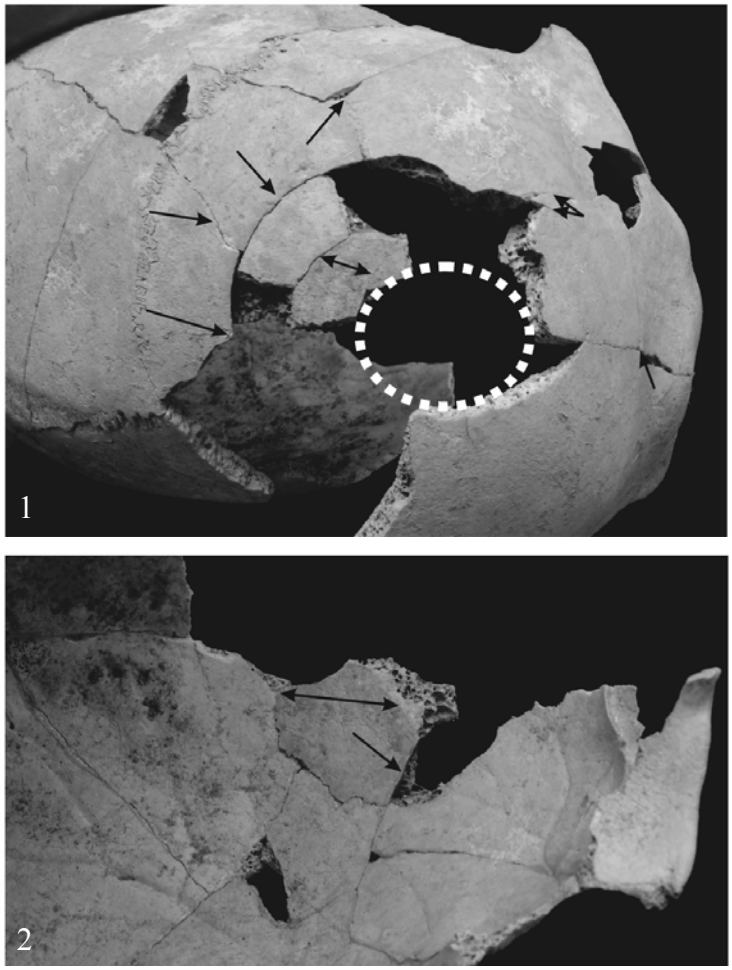

Fig. 7. 1. View from the upper norm of the skull of *individual 5* (the dots circle the presumed area of the blow; the black arrows indicate the radiating fractures resulted from the blow); 2. Endocranial view of the skull of *individual 5* (black arrows indicated the area exfoliated from the bone, as a result of the impact).

[54] Estimated based on cranial synostosis (White, Black, Folkens 2012, p. 391–393, fig. 18), evolution of the sternal rib ends (Loth, İşcan 1989, p. 106–118), evolution of pubic symphysis (White, Black, Folkens 2012, p. 394–397, fig. 18/12) and evolution of auricular surface (White, Black, Folkens 2012, p. 400–404, fig. 19/9).

[55] Estimated based on cranial (Buikstra, Uberlaker 1994, p. 19–21) and postcranial (Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 19–24) traits.

[56] Estimated according to Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 25, fig. 23.

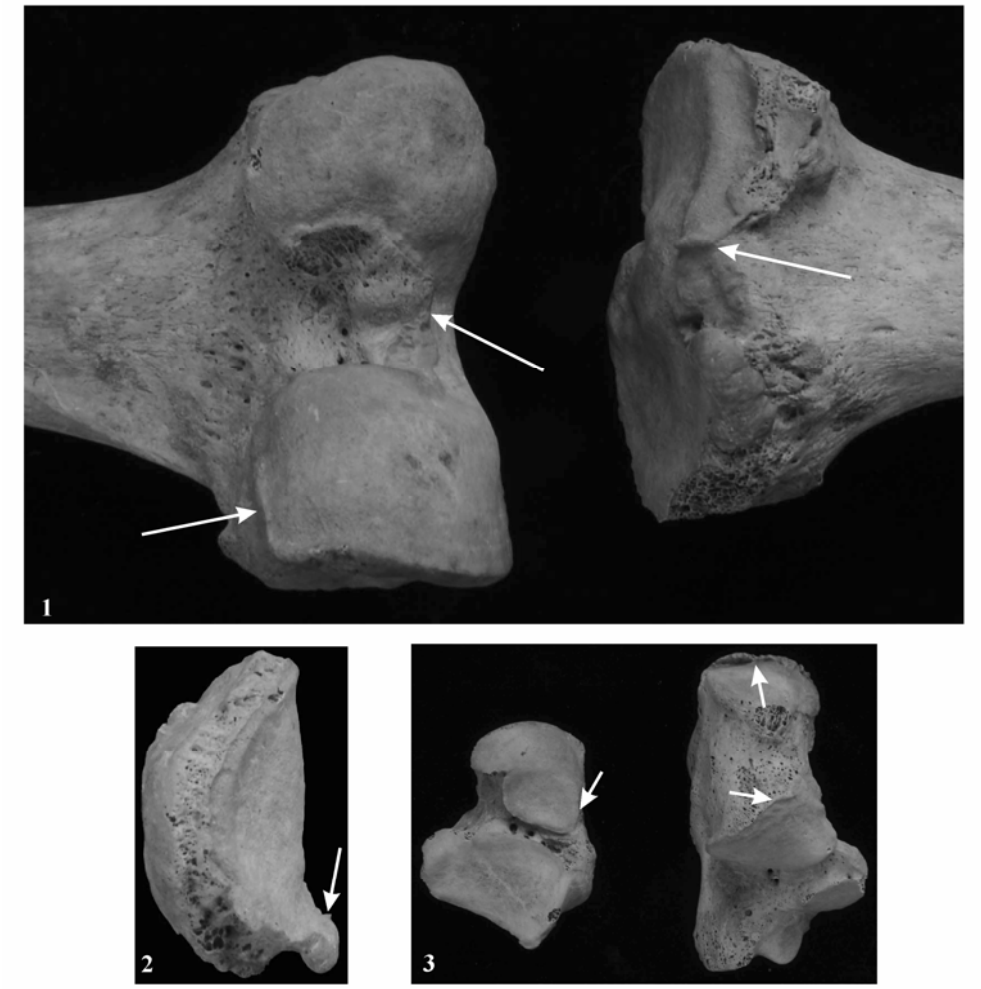

Fig. 8. 1. Posterior view of the right knee joint; 2. Medial view of the right patella; 3. Right talus and calcaneus of *individual 5* (the white arrows point to the development of marginal osteophytes on the epiphyses and of the enthesophytes on Achilles' tendon).

Pathology

The sample exhibits high incidence of caries (22.22%), *antemortem* tooth loss (48.78%) and dental abscesses (4.88%)[57]. *Individuals 4* and *5* show pronounced alveolar resorption, and *individual 5* also has pronounced dental calculus.

[57] Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 15–16, fig. 10.

Table 2

Bucu. Distribution of dental cavities and abscesses
(score: 1 – occlusal cavities; 2 – interproximal cavities; 5 – dental abscesses)

Individual no.	Left								Right							
Mandible	M_3	M_2	M_1	PM_2	PM_1	C	I_2	I_1	I_1	I_2	C	PM_1	PM_2	M_1	M_2	M_3
Ind. 2		1	2	5									5	1		
Maxilla	M^3	M^2	M^1	PM^2	PM^1	C	I^2	I^1	I^1	I^2	C	PM^1	PM^2	M^1	M^2	M^3
Ind. 2			2	2	2									2		
Ind. 4															2	
Ind. 5	2	2														

Table 3

Bucu. Additional articular facets of the tibia (1 – medial articular facet; 2 – lateral articular facet) and talus (3 – medial articular facet; 4 – lateral articular facet; 5 – anterior extension of the medial articular surface; 6 – medial extension of the trochlear surface). Score: 0 – not observed; 1 – absence of trait; 2 – presence of trait

Localization	**1**		**2**		**3**		**4**		**5**		**6**	
Part	**right**	**left**	**Right**	**left**	**right**	**left**	**right**	**left**	**right**	**left**	**right**	**left**
M 2	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M 4	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
M 5	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1

All the identified cavities are bilateral, on molars and premolars of both the maxilla and mandible, and the abscesses are bilateral, on mandibular premolars of *individual 2*.

The cavities are occlusal and interproximal[58]. The occlusal cavities are only on the mandible (Table 2). Traces of enamel hypoplasia[59] are present on the mandibular canines of *individual 5* and on all maxillary canines and incisors of *individual 2*.

The skeleton of *individual 5* shows healed bilateral signs of *cribra orbitalia* and *cribra cranii*[60]. All joints show slight signs of osteoarthrosis[61], more pronounced on the lumbar vertebrae, distal femoral epiphysis of individual 4 and on the knee joints and leg bones of *individual 5*. None of the identified bones shows signs of osteoperiostitis[62].

All skeletons show additional articular facets on the distal tibial epiphysis and on the talus, mainly due to the individual's repeated crouching during his lifetime[63]. These seem to be more pronounced in the male individual (5) and less pronounced in the older, female individual (4) (Table 3).

[58] Brothwell 1981, p. 155, fig. 6/12, 14.
[59] Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 15–16, fig. 10.
[60] Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 12–14, fig. 8–9.
[61] Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 31–33, fig. 27–29.
[62] Steckel *et alii* 2006, p. 30–31, fig. 26.
[63] Barnett 1954; Boulle 2001.

Signs of violent death

The anterior part of the frontal bone of *individual 5*, approximately between the coronal suture and the left frontal eminence, shows signs of an unhealed perimortem injury. This seems to be the result of a blow with a blunt object that caused radiating fractures on the frontal and parietal bones (Fig. 7/1). Since the affected area is missing parts due to ancient and recent occurrences, we cannot estimate what type of object was used to administer the blow. The skull is also strongly deformed due to soil pressure, making it impossible to restore it back to its initial condition. The injury is confirmed by the endocranial exfoliated fragments (Fig. 7/2), indicating that it occurred inwardly and was definitely deadly due to the force and damage it caused.

Radiating fractures appear on the posterior part of the occipital bone, too, but many fragments from this part are missing and it's difficult to estimate whether a second blow was administered.

Due to the manner of deposition, its right arm detached perimortem from the body and placed at a distance from its anatomical position (Fig. 6), we can assume the existence of another trauma that led to its separation (the clavicle and scapula were not deposited in the burial).

Considering the skeleton's good state of representation, the absence from ancient times of a segment of the distal third of the left tibial diaphysis could also be linked to a violent episode, though there are no visible traces of how this fragmentation occurred.

Signs of *perimortem* violence were also recorded for several skeletons deposited in Babadag culture settlements. From the eponymous settlement, signs of violence were found on skulls 1 and 3 of pit 3, S VI/2004, from adult females[64]. At Jurilovca–*Orgame*, skeletons no. 5 (adolescent female), no. 6 (adult male), and 9 (adolescent, indeterminable sex) also showed signs of violent death[65].

Similar cases were also encountered at Niculiţel – *Cornet*, in pit 1, S V/2000, skeleton 1 (female, 14–15 years of age) and skeleton 4, S K II/2000 (indeterminable sex, adolescent-adult)[66]. The recent finds from the settlement at Enisala – *Palanca*, partially published[67], are interesting for the high incidence of perimortem sharp force injuries, mainly to adult males. With almost no exception, these blows are fatal. The injured men also showed numerous signs of healed injuries (fractures of the cranial and nasal bones, ribs and long bones), as well as signs of infections on the lower limbs bones.

[64] Ailincăi 2010b, p. 91, no. 1.10.
[65] Ailincăi, Mirițoiu, Soficaru 2003, p. 308–309.
[66] Constantinescu, Mirițoiu 2008, p. 69–72, fig. 1.a–b, 2.a, 4.c–e.
[67] Ailincăi, Constantinescu 2008; Ailincăi, Mihail, Constantinescu 2013, p. 394.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The burials inside settlements are, without a doubt, a special funerary phenomenon, documented worldwide in different periods and contexts. From the archaeological standpoint, these burials are skeletons or parts of human skeletons, articulated or not, deposited in deallocated habitat structures (pits, dwellings, etc.). One of the major problems of funerary archaeology is the understanding of the space and place of the burial. It's difficult to presume that the choice of funerary space was random, even if the rules by which communities established the area intended for burials are still little known[68]. From this point of view, burials in settlements have been often regarded as deviation from standard and considered "macabre" finds, "atypical" and "irregular" burials related to "the social demotion of the dead"[69]. Despite extraordinary diversity and variety, this conduct is, undoubtedly, a treatment of the human body after death.

Since this practice is many times documented at the same time with the existence of actual cemeteries, the hypotheses regarding the status of the individuals deposited in settlements are very diverse. The human bones found in domestic context have most of the times been considered results of human sacrifices or burials of persons with special status – slaves, prisoners of war, heretics, pariah, convicts, etc.[70] On the other hand, we ought to take into consideration the ethnographic and archaeological documented fact that human society made up numerous complex rituals of burial, some of them involving a series of manipulations and treatments of the body from the time of death until final deposition.

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Not long ago, we drew attention on the existence of a complex attitude of Babadag populations towards the dead, based on specific practices of deposition, decomposition and manipulation of the dead in settlements. The finds recorded so far highlight only certain sequences of these complicated practices. In this regard, an anthropological approach of the burials from Bucu may complete the unknown data about the dead deposited in EIA settlements in the northern Balkans and, especially, in the Lower Danube region[71]. The finds from this site reinforce the idea that such practices existed over the entire areal ascribed to the Babadag culture, as well as the diversity of these cases by type of set-ups, number and state of representation of the dead, deposition method and association with certain objects (ceramic vessels).

[68] Motzoi-Chicideanu 2000, p. 109.

[69] See the two recently published papers Baray, Boulestin 2010; Müller-Scheeßel 2013 – that illustrates very clearly this phenomenon in Europe.

[70] See Boulestin 2010, p. 13 et seq.

[71] Sîrbu 1994; Sîrbu 1997; Irimia 2003; Ailincăi 2008a.

Anthropological analyses, especially in the last decade, of individuals buried in EIA settlements at the Lower Danube have added new and important information regarding age, sex, stature, pathology, signs of violent death, perimortem interventions on the bones, etc. Though, in overall, no selection criteria (sex, age, social status, death is special circumstances) of the dead could be noticed[72], the three analyzed subjects in this study strengthen the already existing opinion of the predominance of adult individuals in such burials[73].

Another important element is that, at this site, too, we have documented signs of violent death. *Individual 5* seems to have received *peri-* and *postmortem* treatment different from the other two individuals. At first glance, this treatment seems related to the sex of the individual, accentuated by the violent death; this skeleton is missing most osteological fragments from ancient times and is the only one with partially articulated bones (right arm bones).

Signs of activity (osteoarthritis and squatting facets on the tibia and talus) during his lifetime are more intense than in the case of female individuals. It exhibits more pronounced signs of osteoarthritis of the lower limbs (Fig. 8/1–3), which can be linked to more intensive use of these limbs compared to the other two individuals. In the case of the other individuals, except for the signs of hypoplasia, the pathological transformations we identified seem to be mainly age-related, more pronounced at *individual 4*, who most probably was the eldest, showing multiple signs of parturition. Thus, it's possible that the male individual had carried out more intense activities during his lifetime compared to the female individuals. It remains to be seen whether these observations are related with how the individual was killed and deposited *postmortem*.

Table 4

Cranial measurements
(Measurements after Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994, p. 74–84)

Individual no.	**Ind. 2**	**Ind. 4**	**Ind. 5**	**Individual no.**	**Ind. 2**	**Ind. 4**	**Ind. 5**
Sex	♀	♀	♂	**Sex**	♀	♀	♂
7 (ekm-ekm)	-	-	59	**28** (go-go)	-	-	89
20 (b-l)	-	99	124	**29** (kdl-kdl)	-	-	107
21 (l-o)	95.79	97.46	90	**30** right	31.98	-	26.5
24 right	26.28	23.61	21.36	**30** left	31.25	27.31	29
24 left	-	23.74	25.33	**31** right	-	-	39
25 (id-gn)	36.29	-	22.5	**31** left	-	44.13	-
26 right	-	-	23.5	**32**	-	48	48
26 left	-	-	23	**33**	-	72	72.5
27 right	-	14.37	9	**34**	-	138	123
27 left	-	10.92	9				

[72] Ailincăi 2008a; Ailincăi 2013a.
[73] Ailincăi 2008a.

Table 5

Postcranial measurements of the female skeletons
(Measurements after Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994, p. 74–84)

	Ind. 2/ 4	Ind. 2/ 4		Ind. 2/ 4	Ind. 2/ 4		Ind. 2/ 4	Ind. 2/ 4
	right	Left		right	left		Right	left
Clavicle			**Ulna**			**Tibia**		
35	124.5/-	132/-	**48**	229.5/247	229/-	**69**	297/-	-/-
36	10.67/-	8.69/11.13	**49**	11.08/12	11.99/12.65	**70**	66/-	-/-
37	8.72/-	9.86/8.15	**50**	13.19/14.12	14.03/13.36	**71**	46/-	-/-
Humerus			**51**	200/-	201/-			
40	-/-	272.5/-	**52**	29/30	29.5/31	**72**	28.89/28.06	28.13/27.83
41	56/54	54/-	**Sacrum**			**73**	19.11/19.19	19.53/19.78
42	-/-	37.65/-	**55**	55.96/-		**74**	77/73	77/75
43	18.98/18.76	17.97/20.2	**Femur**			**Fibula**		
44	15.33/13.64	13.92/13.14	**64**	21.15/19.4	21.40/19.68	**76**	-/12.59	-/13.13
Radius			**65**	30.17/28.57	31.66/29.84	**Calcaneus**		
45	207/223	205.5/-	**66**	22.78/22.38	22.96/22.5	**77**	70/-	71/73
46	9.44/9.56	9.28/9.39	**67**	25.34/25.66	27.18/25.24	**78**	40/-	39/35
47	14.84/13.78	13.57/13.63	**68**	75/74	77/74			

Table 6

Postcranial measurements of the male skeletons
(Measurements after Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994, p. 74–84)

Measurements	Ind. 5	Ind. 5	Measurements	Ind. 5	Ind. 5	Measurements	Ind. 5	Ind. 5
	right	left		right	left		right	left
Clavicle			**49**	12.75	11.96	**66**	24.08	24.65
35	-	126	**50**	14.13	14.75	**67**	26.31	24.19
36	-	10.53	**51**	-	222.5	**68**	78	76
37	-	8.05	**52**	33	31.5	**Tibia**		
Humerus			**Sacrum**			**69**	350	345
40	303.5	303.5	**55**	42.48		**70**	-	-
41	54.5	54	**Os coxae**			**71**	47.5	-
42	39.64	38.19	**56**	205.5		**72**	31.58	32.52
43	19.75	19.03	**57**	149	148	**73**	20.78	19.47
44	14.64	13.8	**Femur**			**74**	81.5	83
Radius			**60**	402	401.5	**Fibula**		
45	-	229.5	**61**	400.5	401	**75**	330.5	-
46	11.45	12	**62**	70.5	69.5	**76**	15.37	16.36
47	13.11	12.66	**63**	39.65	38.78	**Calcaneus**		
Ulna			**64**	20.61	20.65	**77**	70	-
48	-	250	**65**	29.17	28.64			

The incidence of violent injuries varies from one site to another, but they exist in all the sites where anthropological analyses were made. Female and male individuals are affected, most of them adults or adolescents. It's interesting that the majority of the signs of violence affects especially the cranial bones, are lethal and seem to be caused by blunt or sharp objects.

DESPRE ÎNMORMÂNTĂRILE DIN AŞEZAREA APARŢINÂND PERIOADEI TIMPURII A EPOCII FIERULUI DE LA BUCU – *POCHINĂ*, JUD. IALOMIŢA

REZUMAT

Rezumat: Cercetările arheologice întreprinse în situl de la Bucu – *Pochină*, în perioada 1989–2010 au evidenţiat existenţa unei locuiri din perioada timpurie a epocii fierului, care poate fi atribuită culturii Babadag (sf. sec. XI – prima parte a sec. VIII a.Chr.). În această aşezare au fost descoperite patru structuri de habitat care conţineau osemintele a cinci indivizi. În prezentul articol am încercat o analiză cât mai completă a acestor situaţii, prin prezentarea materialelor şi a documentaţiei arheologice, ca şi prin analiza antropologică a trei dintre indivizii înmormântaţi în acest sit.

Studiul înmormântărilor de la Bucu completează datele cunoscute până în prezent despre defuncţii depuşi în aşezările de la începutul epocii fierului din spaţiul nord-balcanic şi în special din zona Dunării de Jos. Descoperirile din acest sit întăresc ideea existenţei acestor practici pe tot arealul atribuit culturii Babadag, dar şi varietatea contextelor arheologice în care apar, atât din punctul de vedere al tipurilor de amenjări, numărului şi stării de reprezentare a defuncţilor, modului de depunere, cât şi al asocierii cu anumite obiecte (vase şi fragmente ceramice, oase de animale, resturi de construcţii).

Cuvinte-cheie: perioada timpurie a epocii fierului, cultura Babadag, înmormântări în aşezări, Dunărea de Jos, violenţă.

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EXPLICAŢIA FIGURILOR

Fig. 1. Situl de la Bucu – *Pochină*, jud. Ialomiţa.

Fig. 2. Planul cercetărilor arheologice din situl de la Bucu – *Pochină*, jud. Ialomiţa (după Renţa 2008).

Fig. 3. Planul şi profilul gropii 1, S XVIII (după Renţa 2008).

Fig. 4. Ceramică descoperită în gr. 1, S XVIII.

Fig. 5. Groapa 1, S LXV/2006.

Fig. 6. Bucu – *Pochină*, bordeiul nr. 12.

Fig. 7. 1. Vedere din norma superioară a craniului *individului* 5 (punctat este reprezentată zona unde presupunem că a venit lovitura; săgeţile negre indică fracturile radiante, rezultat al loviturii primite); 2. vedere endocraniană a craniului *individului* 5 (săgeţile negre indică zona exfoliată din os, ca urmare a loviturii).

Fig. 8. 1. Vedere dinspre posterior a articulaţiei piciorului drept; 2. vedere dinspre medial a rotulei drepte; 3. talusul şi calcaneul drept al *individului 5* (săgeţile albe indică dezvoltarea osteofitelor marginale pe epifize şi a enthesofitelor pe articulaţia tendonului lui Ahile).

Tabel 1. Bucu. Sexe, vârste, staturi şi inventare.

Tabel 2. Bucu. Distribuţia cariilor şi abceselor dentare (scor 1 – carii oclusale; 2 – carii interproximale; 3 – abcese dentare).

Tabel 3. Bucu. Faţete articulare suplimentare la tibie (1– faţetă articulară medială; 2 – faţetă articulară laterală) şi talus (3 – faţetă articulară medială; 4 – faţetă articulară laterală; 5 – prelungire anterioară a suprafeţei articulare mediale; 6 – extensie medială a suprafeţei trochleare). Scoruri 0 – lipsa observaţiei; 1– lipsa trăsăturii; 2 – prezenţa trăsăturii.

Tabel 4. Măsurători schelet cranian.

Tabel 5. Măsurători schelet post-cranian al scheletelor de sex feminin.