

The Children of the Steppe: descendance as a key to Yamnaya success

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Abstract: To cross the border raised by the raw information obtained after revealing an archaeological feature has always been a challenge. From the practical to the interpretative archaeology, lifting this veil has been a constant concern of researchers. In a hierarchised, masculinised society, as the Yamnaya one seems to have been, the presence of graves of subadults is an important piece of information for understanding the social framework specific to these communities. Due to the investigations conducted in the Prahova area, the topic of this article may be illustrated with relevant case studies. We shall further describe this subject, assess a number of recent finds within a larger framework and outline some ideas regarding the social structure of the Yamnaya funerary phenomenon.

Rezumat: Să traversezi frontiera trasată de informația brută obținută prin dezvelirea unui complex arheologic a fost mereu o provocare. De la arheologia practică la cea interpretativă, ridicarea acestui văl a fost o preocupare permanentă a cercetătorilor. Într-o societate ierarhizată, masculinizată, așa cum pare a fi fost cea Yamnaya, prezența unor morminte de subadulți reprezintă o informație importantă în înțelegerea cadrului social specific acestor comunități. Grație cercetărilor din arealul Prahova, subiectul abordat în acest articol poate fi exemplificat prin studii de caz relevante. În rândurile de mai jos descriem subiectul, inserăm o serie de descoperiri recente într-un cadru mai larg și conturăm câteva idei privind structura socială a fenomenului funerar Yamnaya.

Keywords: tumulus, grave, Yamnaya, children, ritual.

Cuvinte cheie: tumul, mormânt, Iamnaia, copii, ritual.

◆ Introduction

In the last years, 24 earthen tumuli have been excavated (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013; 2014; 2015a; 2017a; 2018; 2019a; 2019b) in the development area of the city of Ploiești - *Prahova area* (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017c). Overall, 75 graves containing a total number of 93 individuals have been uncovered and 46 of them were prehistoric funerary features in which 76 individuals were buried. The other graves belonged to time frames following the Yamnaya funerary phenomenon. We should mention that in 1941-1943 two mounds were researched in the *Triaj* ('marshalling yard') area of Ploiești City, revealing 21 prehistoric graves with 24 individuals (E. Comșa 1989; A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013)¹.

These investigations have generated a consistent set of data, some of which have already been used in academic papers while others will be dealt with in future publications. Cumulating the new information and the documentary basis resulting from older research, we have presented, in a number of studies, several conclusions on a hectic millennium (3300-2300 BC)

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¹ In the first mound there were two graves which may be attributed to the final period of the Middle Bronze Age (A. Frînculeasa 2016, p. 124, pl. 15/11-12). There were also graves from the first half of the first millennium AD and Medieval ones.

during which the elements originating in the North-Pontic space contributed to a large extent to the course of development in the Lower Danube area (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015a; 2017b; 2019a; 2019b). Between 3000 and 2500 BC, *Old Europe* seemed to have been overwhelmed by the impact of the Yamnaya funerary phenomenon, an issue that has been heatedly debated by western scientists in the past years (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a). The expansion of Yamnaya communities towards the west of Europe has been correlated with genetic and linguistic information. We have come to discuss a phenomenon originating in the North-Pontic and North-Caucasian area, which, starting with the early third millennium BC, triggered the adjustment of the genetic baggage/setting and of the Eneolithic social framework in Europe. Reshaped, these components became, over time, the foundations of the European civilisation (V. Heyd 2017, 2019; K. Kristiansen *et alii* 2017).



Fig. 1. The Yamnaya package in the *Prahova* area – ritual (A) and grave goods (B, C, D): grave 3 from Ariceştii-Rahtivani, mound I (1); hair rings found in Ariceştii-Rahtivani, mound I/Gr.3 (2), in Gr.1 (3), and in Blejoi mound III/Gr.1 (4); pendants made of mammal canine teeth from Târgşoru Vechi, Gr.10A (5); cord-decorated pots from Gr.15 and Gr.20 from *Mound II* from Ploieşti-Triaş (6-7).

„Pachetul” Yamnaya din arealul *Prahova*–inventar ritual (A) şi funerar (B, C, D): momântul 3 de la Ariceştii-Rahtivani, movila I (1); inele de buclă descoperite la Ariceştii-Rahtivani, movila I/M.3 (2), M.1 (3), şi la Blejoi în movila II/M. 1 (4); pândantive realizate din canini de mamifere de la Târgşoru Vechi, M.10A (5); vase decorate cu şnurul din M.15 şi M.20 din *Movila II* de la Ploieşti-Triaş.

Apart from the natural environment represented by the steppe/low plain or plateau areas, the Yamnaya phenomenon has several characteristics such as the earthen mound, the rectangular burial pit, the supine position of the deceased with the lower limbs bent and raised at the knees, the west-east orientation, the presence of ochre (lumps and/or sprinkled on the body), the usual absence of grave goods (fig. 1). Most primary/main graves and also secondary ones belong to adult men. The massive constitution of these individuals has been noted as compared to men from previous periods. In terms of the social framework, the occurrence of graves of subadults also becomes relevant. Furthermore, some of them are the primary funerary features, for which tumuli were erected.

Relying on a number of recent finds, we shall further assess the subadult graves discovered in Yamnaya tumuli. We have included, in the group of subadult individuals, the categories *Infans I*, *Infans II* and *Juvenis* according to the Soviet methodology (R. Martin 1928) or *Infants*, *Children*, *Adolescents* as described in the Anglo-Saxon literature (J.E. Buikstra, D.H. Ubelaker 1994). We shall maintain the *Prahova area* as an area of interest, but we shall explore the topic beyond this steady framework created by the rhythm and quantity of research, both of which should not be irrelevant when approaching a topic (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2018, p. 78-79).

◆ Case study–investigations in the *Prahova area*

Several graves with subadult individuals have been found in the tumuli investigated in the *Prahova area* and they were attributed to both the chronological horizon preceding the emergence of Yamnaya burials as well as the Yamnaya proper (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b). A number of discoveries made in the last years are the core around which we shall elaborate on this topic.

Târgșoru Vechi – in 2016, *Movila de la Pădurea Beizadele* ('The Mound from the Beizadele Forest'), 32 m in diameter and 1.10 m high, was investigated (pl. 2). Three of the 12 graves found date to the first half of the 3rd millennium BC, two of which are double (Gr.2 and Gr.10) and one is individual (Gr.9) and represents the primary burial (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a).

Grave 2 (Gr.2A+B) – is a secondary grave in a rectangular pit, 1.47x1.20 m. The pit was dug in the mound mantle, partially overlapping the circular ditch set out for the primary burial. In the pit, two individuals were lying in supine position with the lower limbs bent at the knees and raised and then fallen to the left. They were N-S oriented. Both individuals were adult males (aged 43-45 and no more than 30, respectively), with no grave goods, except an ochre lump placed near the skull of individual B. Radiocarbon dating/Individual A: 4176±32 BP/2886-2636 cal BC (2 sigma, 95.4% probability) (pl. 4).

Grave 10 (Gr.10A+B) – is a secondary grave found in the circular ditch surrounding the primary grave. The pit was identified at 1 m deep, whereas its bottom was 7-8 cm lower than that of the ditch, namely at -1.43 m at the most. The pit widened around 20 cm towards the northern wall of the ditch, which means it was no more than 1.24x0.70 m and about 0.5 m deep. There were two individuals in the pit (pl. 5).

Gr.10A – the relatively well-preserved bones of a subadult individual, in supine position, with the upper limbs stretched along the body and the lower limbs initially raised, then fallen to the left, were identified. Not all bones had been preserved. The orientation was W-E. A necklace consisting of 7 perforated dog/fox canines had been put around the neck of

the deceased (pl. 5/2; fig. 5). Anthropological determination: indeterminable, estimated age of 4. C14 dating: 4140±33 BP/2875-2620 cal BC (2 sigma, 95.4% probability).

Gr.10B – the relatively well-preserved bones of a subadult individual, in supine position, with the upper limbs stretched along the body, hands on the pelvis, and the lower limbs initially raised and later fallen to the left, were identified. The skull of the deceased was disturbed by the path of an animal lair. The orientation was W-E, no grave goods were found. Anthropological determination: indeterminable, estimated age of 8.

Grave 9 (Gr.9) – was the primary/main grave, placed in the centre of the mound. It had a rectangular pit with carefully rounded corners, which narrowed towards the bottom. The pit was 0.90-1 m deep, 1.33x0.82 m in the upper part and 1.21x0.65 m in the lower part. A subadult lying in supine position, with the upper limbs stretched along the body and the lower limbs initially raised then fallen to the left, was found in the pit. An ochre lump was placed south of the skull (pl. 6a). Due to the ochre, the skullcap was red; ochre marks were also noted on other bones (pl. 6). Anthropological determination: indeterminable, estimated age of 6. C14 dating: 4123±33 BP/2871-2579 cal BC (2 sigma, 95.4% probability). The grave was surrounded by a circular ditch with a diameter of about 9.2 m, rim width of 0.40-0.45 m and depth of approximately 0.40 m (pl. 3). It had an entrance-break with an opening of 0.65 m in the south – south-eastern area (pl. 3/4).

Given the characteristics of the primary burial and of the chronological episodes defined by secondary burials, a few considerations regarding the evolution of this funerary monument should be made. We have correlated the information with the C14 dates provided for the three Yamnaya graves. Several archaeological or natural layers, which are more or less relevant to understanding the evolution of the mound (pl. 7), were identified². The research method with parallel trenches, enforced by the situation in the field, deprived us of the presence of additional stratigraphic baulks (traced perpendicularly), particularly useful considering the complexity of this tumulus. It is very important to note that, if the mantle erected over the primary grave is from the same type of soil as that of the ancient ground level, the mound covering the ditch was raised using a yellow-clayish soil, probably excavated from the area west of the tumulus, where there is a riverbed. Several chronological episodes are relevant and worth mentioning, as follows:

- Gr.2 (secondary grave) is the last Yamnaya burial; the grave pit perforated the mound already erected over Gr.10 (also covering Gr.9). Earth was added over this grave, possibly forming another mound 12.5 m in diameter and 0.80 m in maximum height.
- Gr.10 burial found in the ditch surrounding Gr.9; once the individual had been laid in, a mound was erected, covering the circular ditch as well; it was made from yellow clay and was 14.10 m in diameter (N-S);
- excavation of Gr.9 pit – the excavated gravel formed a lens with a maximum thickness of 0.15 m (pl. 7/2); it was placed on three sides of the grave (N, E, S) and irregularly spread/levelled; once the individual had been put in and the grave sealed with a wooden cover, the mantle made from dusty loam, brown in colour, was raised; it was about 5.8 m in diameter and had 0.70 m in maximum height; the ditch surrounding Gr.9 was excavated in the natural layer containing small pebbles; it was 15-25 cm deep and it is the level on which the tumulus was erected. Two initial events may be correlated with this level, namely the digging of the primary grave and of the

² Post-prehistoric features were excavated in the abandoned mound. We shall not insist on these chronological episodes and their stratigraphic relevance, as these data have already been published (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a).

surrounding circular ditch. Also, the profile shows that the mantle collapsed towards the inside of the pit (pl. 7/1), probably after the wooden cover gave way due to the decay and the pressure exerted by the earth above.

All graves were covered with earthen mounds and/or earth which later formed a single tumulus. Some observations are still uncertain. The mound suggested for Gr.10 is still a matter of debate. We could not detect traces of Gr.10 pit to accidentally affect the ditch, although the grave was superposed by a magistral baulk. It is possible that the ditch might have still been opened when the two children were placed in Gr.10. The ditch was slightly widened to the north in the grave area (the same side and one of the individuals were affected by an animal burrowing). The filling of the ditch is similar to that of the grave "pit" and of the mound covering both features. Not even on the profile could it be noticed that the clay mound overlapping the ditch and covering the mantle attributed to the primary burial had been affected in any way. Also, we should have in mind the W-E orientation of the grave, and the fact that the area where it was placed in the described arc of the circle and the one to the north, were the only regions in which the burial could comply with this orientation without strongly affecting the ditch. Furthermore, we should note the relatively small depth of the Gr.10 pit, which suggests another hypothesis, that it could have been dug from above the mound enclosing Gr.9 and the ditch (fig. 2).

As regards Gr.2 with N-S orientation, the ditch was probably affected accidentally, for, when that particular burial occurred, it had already been covered by a mound also enclosing both Gr.9 and Gr.10. It is difficult to establish the sequence of events between the ditch, the Gr.9 pit and the grave mantle. If the gravel extracted following the excavation of Gr.9 pit was laid near the pit and is directly superposed by the mantle, the earth excavated from the ditch containing the small pebbles may have been used for erecting the mound covering the primary burial. The last event that of finishing the mound as a single body with regular shape, also remains uncertain. Probably, the final shape of the tumulus was modelled with the addition of earth over Gr.2, which was located slightly laterally from the centre of the mound³.

As the sequence of funerary events shows, absolute dates seem slightly contradictory, in that the result for the primary burial is somewhat newer than those obtained for the two secondary graves (tab. 1). We shall not go into technical data that have to do with the quantity of collagen preserved in the bones of the three individuals, the age difference at the time of death of the individuals from whom samples were taken, but it is obvious how important the archaeological excavation is when the result of an absolute date may question the information extracted from field observations. Taking a sample from a reliable context is a landmark that should only secure the information resulted from unequivocal archaeological observations.

³ It is obvious that agricultural works, erosion, other natural phenomena, the secondary features have modelled the mound as it was looking before the archaeological investigation.

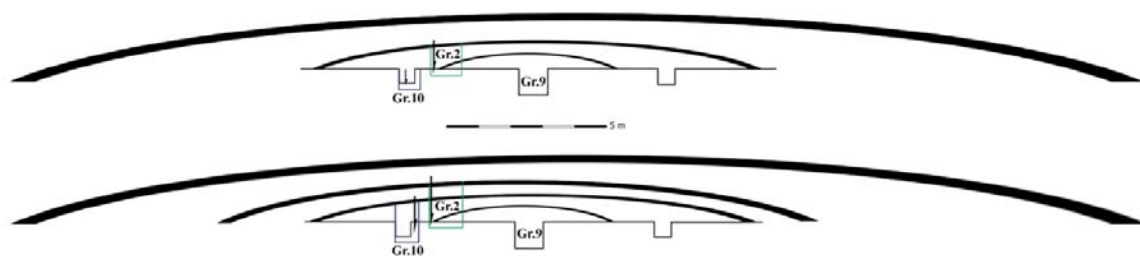


Fig. 2. Evolution patterns of the Târgșoru Vechi tumulus.
Modele de evoluție ale tumului de la Târgșoru Vechi.

ID LAB	Context	Sample	Date in years BP	Calibrated years, 1 sigma/68.2%	Calibrated years, 2 sigma/95.4%	Mean value
code DeA-10666	Gr.2A	Human bone	4176±32	2879-2697	2886-2636	2768
code DeA-10667	Gr.9	Human bone	4123±33	2858-2623	2871-2579	2721
code DeA-10668	Gr.10A	Human bone	4140±33	2864-2634	2875-2620	2739

Tab. 1. C14 dates from the Târgșoru Vechi mound.
Date C14 din tumulul de la Târgșoru Vechi.

Blejoii – in 2018 we investigated an earthen mound (T.IV) which was mostly destroyed by unauthorized excavations. Three inhumation graves were found, all with Yamnaya characteristics. Of the three features, Gr.1 was of an adult, whereas Gr.2 and Gr.3 belonged to subadults. The last mentioned grave was the primary one, for which the mound had been raised (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b).

Grave 1 (Gr.1) – was a burial dug in the tumulus mantle, at a depth of 0.60 m relative to the preserved level of the mound. The grave pit was 1.40x0.70 m and rectangular with rounded corners (the eastern side of the pit and the human skeleton were affected by an animal lair). The osteological remains of an individual placed in supine position, with the upper limbs stretched along the body, hands on the pelvis, lay on the bottom of the pit. The lower limbs were bent from the knees, raised and fallen to the left. The orientation was W-E, the skull to the west (pl. 8/1). Overlapping the left shoulder, two spiral hair rings were placed near a skull fragment in secondary position. One was made of copper coated with a silver sheet and the other was silver. Inside the skull, two other silver hair rings were found (pl. 8/2). Anthropological determination: adult female, aged over 55. C14 dating: 4212±29 BP/2900-2680 cal BC (2 sigma, 95.4% probability).

Grave 2 (Gr.2) – was a secondary feature excavated in the mound mantle, found right below Gr.1 (-0.70 m) after removing its bones. The subadult individual had been initially placed in the pit in which the adult of Gr.1 was to be later buried (the pit in which both individuals were buried appears to have been reused, probably widened). The pit was W-E oriented, rectangular with rounded corners. The deceased, an individual in a very poor preservation state, was W-E oriented, lying supine, and hands probably near the body. The lower limbs, initially raised, later fell to the left (pl. 9/1, 4). A small poorly-preserved, bitruncated bowl with cord decoration lay north-north-west of the skull (pl. 9/3, 5-6). An ochre lump was near the skull, but ochre traces were also identified next to the lower limbs (pl. 9/2, 4). Anthropological determination: infant, 9 months old, indeterminable.

Grave 3 (Gr. 3) – was the primary grave in the centre of the mound, over which the mantle was erected. It was excavated from the ancient ground level identified at -1.60 m and perforated the natural layer of gravel. The bottom reached -2.10 m. The pit was rectangular with rounded corners, slightly narrowing towards the bottom, W-E oriented and 0.75x0.60 m (at the rim). The deceased was lying supine, with the upper limbs stretched along the body and lower ones probably initially raised, then fallen on both sides. The orientation was W-E (pl. 8/3-4). An ochre lump was placed north of the individual's left arm. Traces of ochre were discovered in the pelvis area and near the lower limbs (pl. 8/3). Anthropological determination: infant, 9 months old, indeterminable.

Târgșoru Nou – in 2019, we investigated a mound at Târgșoru Nou (Prahova County)⁴. *Movila de la Pădure* was partially destroyed, about 25 m in diameter and 1 m high. It overlapped an occupation level attributed to the Cernavodă II culture. The only prehistoric grave (Gr.2), representing the primary burial attributed to the Yamnaya communities, was found in the centre of the mound. The grave pit identified at 0.75 m deep was rectangular with slightly rounded corners, 1.55x1 m, W-E oriented. On the bottom of the pit there was a subadult lying supine with the upper limbs stretched near the body. The lower limbs were bent, knees raised, then fallen on the right side. The deceased was roughly W-E oriented, the skull to the west (pl. 10/1-2, 4). An ochre lump was found near the right shoulder. Ochre traces were also identified north of the left shoulder and on other bones as well (pl. 10/2-3). Anthropological determination: aged 9 (\pm 24 months), indeterminable⁵. C14 date: 4037 \pm 43 BP/2849-2467 cal BC (2 sigma, 95.4% probability) (fig. 3).

⁴A. Frînculeasa, O. Negrea, D. Garvăn, R. Munteanu, E. Paveleț took part in the investigations.

⁵ Determination by Angela Simalsik ('Olga Necrasov' Centre of Anthropological Research, the Romanian Academy – Iași Branch).

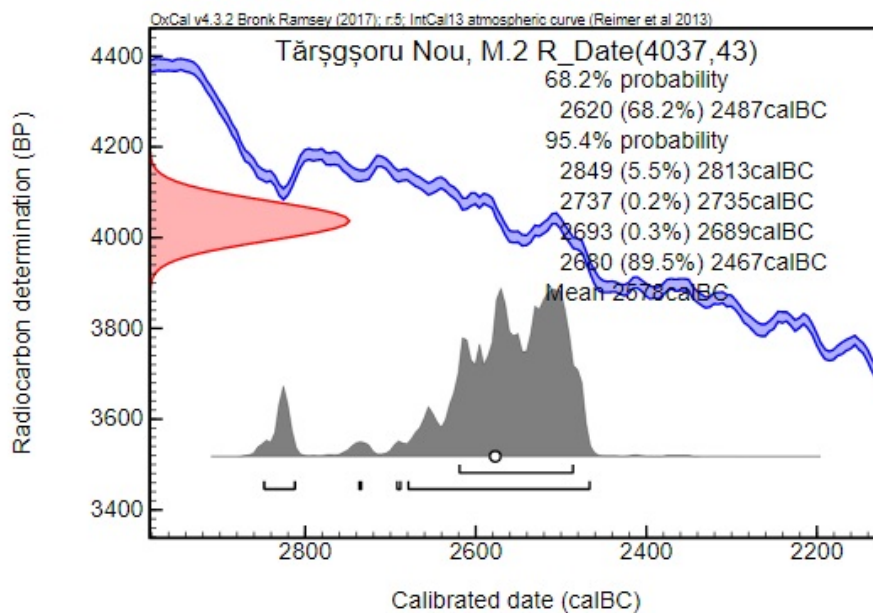


Fig. 3. Chart of the C14AMS date attributed to the grave from Târșșoru Nou.
Grafic cu data C14AMS atribuită mormântului de la Târșșoru Nou.

Nedelea – in 2019 we investigated what was left of a tumulus destroyed by recent mechanized excavations. The central part of the mound was preserved only partially, on an area of about 8x4 m. Approximately 0.50 m deep (relative to the mantle preservation level), the primary grave was found. It had a rectangular pit 1.80x1.15 m, 0.90 m deep, oriented W-E. The excavated gravel had been put along both sides of the pit, about 0.35-0.40 m away from the long edges and formed two elongated mounds (L=3.50x1.60 m; maximum height=0.42 m to the N and 0.30 m to the S) (pl. 11/1). The deceased was lying supine, with the upper limbs stretched along the body, slightly bent at the elbows (the left one was on the pelvis), the lower limbs had been bent, raised and then fallen to the left. The skeleton was W-E oriented, skull to the west. Anthropological determination: aged 12-15, indeterminable⁶ (pl. 11).

Graves of subadults have been also researched in other tumuli investigated in the *Prahova area*; these burials may be attributed to the stage preceding the Yamnaya horizon. We should mention Gr.5 (primary) from tumulus IV of Aricești-Rahtivani. In a collective grave, with skeletal remains that were manipulated post mortem, a subadult aged 7-9 was laid in the same pit as two adult men (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2014, p. 192; 2015a). Subadults have also been found in T.III/Gr.1 and T.IV/Gr.3 from Păulești. As regards the first tumulus, in a secondary grave in which post mortem body manipulation was noticed, three children aged 4, 5 and 7 were buried together with an adult (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013, p. 26). In the second tumulus mentioned, an *Infans* aged 1 had been placed in the same pit as two adult men (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017d, p. 208). Of the Ploiești-*Triaj* excavations, we should mention Gr.3 from *Mound I*, attributed to a subadult lying in side-crouched position, with an inventory consisting of a bowl,

⁶ Determination by Martin Trautmann (University of Helsinki, The Yamnaya Impact on Prehistoric Europe project).

and ornaments made of copper such as a spectacle-shaped pendant and tubes, or ring-shaped shell pearls (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013, p. 29).

As regards other Yamnaya features in the *Prahova area*, let us also mention the 1943 investigations of *Mound II* from *Ploiești-Triaș* in which three subadult graves were found (Gr.15, G.20 and Gr.21). A cord-decorated bowl was found in each of the three features (pl. 12), while Gr.15 (pl.12/1-2) and Gr.20 (pl. 12/3) also revealed a silver spiral hair ring each (E. Comșa 1989; A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015a). We should also refer to Gr.2A/T.II from Păulești, which was a secondary grave of a subadult (aged 15) arranged according to the Yamnaya ritual, with an inventory that included kaolin, shell and copper ornaments (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013; 2015a, p. 61). Age limits having been thus established by anthropologists, we could also add other complexes such as Gr.2/T.III from Păulești (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013, p. 27) or Gr.3/T.I from Aricești-Rahtivani (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013, p. 25)⁷ situated at the upper limit of adolescence (20 years). In these features, the age of passage between subadult and adult remains an open discussion.

If we make a synthesis of the research in the Prahova area (fig. 4), we shall notice there are 31 Yamnaya graves distributed in 20 tumuli of the 24 investigated⁸. Overall, 35 individuals have been identified because four of the graves contained the skeletal remains (entire or fragments) of two individuals each. Subadults occur in both primary and secondary burials, to almost the same extent as the adults. In terms of the secondary burials, the proportion is completely different from those of subadults, for here there are also the graves intended for adult women. The subadult graves are more numerous as compared to those attributed to adult women. Within the social pyramid, subadults seem to enter an equation in which bloodline was extremely relevant in this society. In the case of the Târgșoru Vechi grave, the ditch delimiting the premises and the entrance point to its symbolic role and also to the presence of an important figure buried here and the probability of a pilgrimage to this grave.

◆ On Yamnaya funerals and the children's status

All the statistics we have had at hand are mere landmarks, as they are analysis tools posing two problems: one related to the samples approached, where the selection is artificial, very subjective, and the other which has to do with the chronology of several graves in tumuli, for some of the features belong to cultural contexts that cannot be attributed to the Yamnaya burial horizon. As regards the West-Pontic area, the prevalence of burials of adult men in Yamnaya tumuli is mentioned (V. Heyd 2011, p. 539), but subadult funerals constantly appear as well. We should say that in the absence of anthropological analyses, which is usually the case for the West-Pontic area, the children's skeletons have been determined by archaeologists (S. Ivanova 2000, p. 389; E. Kaiser, K. Winger 2015, p. 125). The anthropological data available seem to indicate that the graves of subadults are more numerous than those of adult women. However, building a mound especially dedicated to a subadult is not a common occurrence.

⁷ At a first analysis, the individual was included in the category of adults/the 20-25 age group (A. Frînculeasa 2007, p. 185).

⁸ In two mounds no graves have been found.

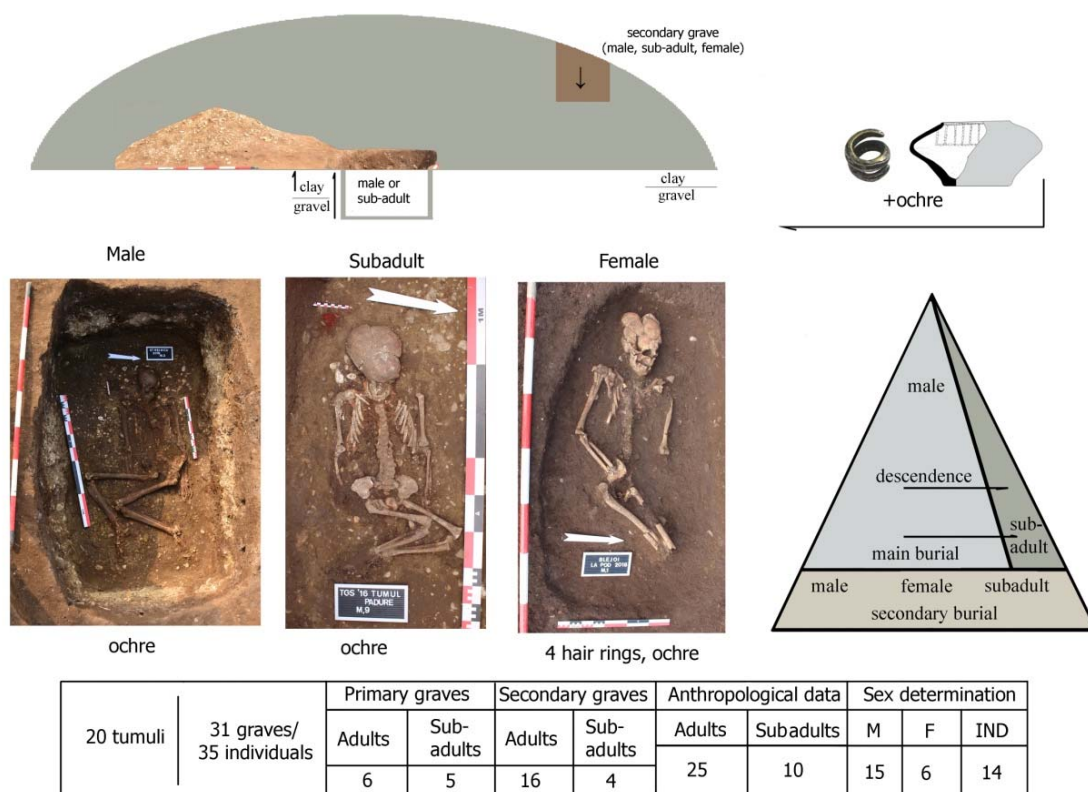


Fig. 4. Yamnaya graves in the *Prahova* area: synthesis of the ritual and of anthropological diagnosis.
Morminte Yamnaya în *arealul Prahova*: sinteza ritualului și a diagnosticului antropologic.

On the territory of Romania, graves of subadults have been found at Gurbănești T.II/Gr.3, Gr.4 (D.V. Rosetti 1959; V. Zirra 1960, p. 103), Sultana-C.A.P. *Ilie Pintilie* (S. Morintz, B. Ionescu 1968, p. 116), Sultana-Movila Mare (D. Șerbănescu, A. Comșa 2012, p. 26), Baldovinești (N. Harțușche, F. Anastasiu 1968), Glăvăneștii Vechi T.I-1949/Gr.12, Gr.17 (E. Comșa 1987, p. 374, 376), Glăvăneștii Vechi T.2-1950/Gr.4 (E. Comșa 1985, p. 342, fig. 4), Valea Lupului-Fabrica Chimică/Gr.11, Gr.12 (M. Dinu 1959a, p. 251; S. Antoniu, M.E. Roșca-Gramatopol 1966, p. 51), Giurcani Gr.4 (C. Buzdugan 1981, p. 9), Verbița-Movila II/Gr.1 (D. Berciu, P. Roman 1984, p. 16), Bolotești T.2/Gr.5, Gr.12 (C. Buzdugan *et alii* 1987, p. 227, 229), Liești-Arbănașu/Gr.2 (M. Brudiu 2003, p. 39-40), Chersăcosul - Gr.2 (V. Merlan *et alii* 1999). We should also mention *Movila Mare* from Smeeni (N. Simache, V. Teodorescu 1962), in which four subadult graves have been found (Gr.12, 19B, 21 and 29), which represents a significant proportion of the total number of Yamnaya graves (no more than 18) (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017b). Of the 13 prehistoric graves in *Movila II* from Ploiești-Triaș (E. Comșa 1989), no more than 8 were Yamnaya (4 precede the Yamnaya and one is post-Yamnaya), 3 of which belong to children.

Another primary grave attributed to a child is Gr.1/1952 from Hamangia. The pit was rectangular with rounded corners and covered with wooden beams. The deceased was in supine position, lower limbs folded and fallen to the right. Ochre was sprinkled on the bottom of the pit and the inventory included a clay bowl decorated with incisions and a rectangular

marble pendant (D. Berciu, S. Morintz 1953, p. 126; D. Pippidi, D. Berciu 1965, p. 53). An anthropomorphic funerary stele has been recovered from this tumulus (V. Pârvan 1925). Gr.2 (child aged 3-4) in the Chersăcosu tumulus may have also been the primary burial, although the partial destruction of the mound creates problems of interpretation. The grave pit was covered with a stone slab (V. Merlan *et alii* 1999, p. 210-211). As for Ciulnița, Gr.25 located in the centre of mound II is notable, as the body seems to be laid supinely, lower limbs folded, raised and fallen to the side. The pit was rectangular, of large size, that of an adult (E. Rența 2016, p. 88). Such a situation has also been noticed in the case of graves of subadults over the age of 7 in the North-West Pontic area (S. Ivanova 2003, p. 163). In the *Prahova area*, individuals aged 7 to 9 years old had small pits. The only grave with a pit similar in size to an adult's is that of Nedelea, in which a child aged 12-15 was laid. In Bulgaria, we should mention Gr.5 from Kamen-Shekerdzha, a secondary child grave (age unknown) with a pit 1.9x1.25 m (D. Dimitrova 2014, p. 78).

As regards Romania, the statistics are landmarks of the disaster. For the southern area, there are some data regarding the land between the Argeș River and the Buzău River. In the 256 complexes, 261 individuals have been found, of which only 61 skeletons have been analyzed, which represents 23% of those discovered (B. Preda 2017, p. 195)⁹. It should be said that these statistics also include the analyses of individuals recently found in the *Prahova area*; however, anthropological data are very few in terms of the mounds in Muntenia (B. Preda 2017, p. 195). We have information about anthropological lots identified as originating (selectively) from Smeeni, Sultana-Movila Mare, Brăilița, Radovanu, possibly Vitănești. In the East-Carpathian space, the subadults represent roughly 18-19% of the individuals analysed in the about 50 investigated tumuli (F. Burtănescu 2002, p. 244)¹⁰.

In Bulgaria, of the 175 graves attributed to the Yamnaya culture, only 68 have been subject to anthropological analyses and the similar percentage of men and women can be noticed. The number of subadult individuals is somewhat larger, which is due to the easiness with which they can be identified by archaeologists (E. Kaiser, K. Winger 2015, p. 125). Such a grave attributed to a subadult is Gr.2/T.II from Plachidol with an oval pit covered with a stone slab (Y. Panayotov 1989, fig. 80-82). At Zimnitsa two graves (Gr.4 and Gr.5) of subadults, considered primary, have been investigated. A hair ring and ochre have been found in each of the two graves (T. Valchev, Z. Blazheska 2019, p. 239-240). Also in Bulgaria, we should mention other finds such as those of Polsko Kosovo (D. Stancev 2002), Madara (I. Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011, p. 252), Boyanovo (I. Iliev 2011), Kamen-Shekerdzha (D. Dimitrova 2014), Tarnovo (St. Alexandrov 2019), etc. In Serbia, the subadult graves from Batka-Pašić, Perlez, Uljma, and Pancevo are known (P. Medovic 1987; J. Koledin *et alii* 2019).

In Hungary the anthropological lot is not consistent either, the number of subadult graves being slightly larger than that of adult women (A. Marcsik 1979, p. 87, 90; S. Zofmann 2011, tab. 2, 3). In this area, we should mention Gr.7/T.III from Kétegyháza, which was the primary burial attributed to a child (aged 12-14) (A. Marcsik 1979, p. 88). The pit had a cover made of wooden beams and the inventory consisted of an animal teeth necklace (43 pieces), two silver hair rings, three sheep astragals and ochre (J. Ecsedy 1979, p. 22-23). The feature was dated to 4090±35 BP/2864-2495 cal BC (C. Gerling 2015, p. 60, appendix A II/tab. 1). Gr.7 from

⁹ To the lot analysed by the mentioned author, we have also added the tumuli investigated in this area in 2017-2019.

¹⁰ F. Burtănescu identified 45 researched tumuli. In the meantime, tumuli have been investigated at Găvani, Costâna, Popeni and Târgu Frumos.

Sárrétudvary-Órhalom is also noteworthy; it was a double grave, in which an adult man and a child aged 5-7/Gr.7A were identified. The grave had a spectacular inventory, consisting of an axe and a copper dagger, two gold hair rings, a bowl, ochre (J. Dani, I. Nepper 2006, p. 33).

In the Western-Pontic area, children's graves are well-represented in terms of both primary and secondary burials. Such tumuli have been investigated at Taraklia, Borisovka, Vishnevoe, Novo-Kotovsk, Trapovka, Sanjeica, Novoselnița, Holmoskoe, Gura Bîcului, Gradeșnița, Nagornoe, Plavni, Bălăbani, Găvănoasa, etc (S. Ivanova 2000, 2003; A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b). We should also mention tumulus 2 from Sărăteni (O. Levițchi *et alii* 1996) and a child's grave at Glubokoe, the inventory of which included an askoidal vessel (A. Häusler 1976, board 33/3), as well as the investigations of Pidlisivka or Porohy (V. Klochko *et alii* 2015a; 2015b). A large number of features (over 2100) was already known in this area a decade ago, of which 322 individuals were analysed, 235 adults (161 men and 74 women) and 62 children, while 25 were indeterminable. S. Ivanova estimates an average of 19.7% of children's burials in the Western-Pontic area (S. Ivanova 2000, p. 389-390). Almost 30% of the child graves have grave goods. Few graves have tools in their inventory and weapons occur in one feature only. Instead, there are significant quantities of adornments (silver or copper hair rings, copper bracelets) (S. Ivanova 2000). Mammalian teeth pendants, astragals (S. Ivanova 2000, 2003) and also the occurrence of funerary stelae on children's graves (S. Ivanova 2003, p. 161) are also significant.

Moving further east (the Northern-Pontic area), for example on the right side of the Dnieper and the Nadporozhye river, there is a lot of 74 burials of subadults, representing approximately 12.7% of the inventoried/selected graves, most of them individual (68). Main subadult burials number 32 and 28 of them have inventories, which means about 21%, a higher percentage than that of adults. There are no tools and weapons in subadult graves. Also, the children's graves have ochre (I.F. Kovaleeva 1998).

◆ Relevant elements – short presentation

A situation worth noting is that of Gr.9, which is the main burial in the tumulus researched at Târgșoru Vechi (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a). The individual was around 6 years old and received special attention. Although the grave had no grave goods, only ochre, it was surrounded by a circular ditch (pl. 3) (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a, p. 16). This kind of arrangement is not very common north of the Danube, being identified in tumuli in the *Prahova area* for the first time. In the Romanian territory, there are three other prehistoric tumuli in which ditches have been found, namely at Valea Lupului (M. Dinu 1959a, 1959b, 1974), Galați-Dunărea district (M. Brudiu 2003, fig. 16/B) and the discovery from Medgidia, beyond the Danube (C. Schuster *et alii* 2011; Al. Morintz 2015). The ditch from Medgidia was located on the edge of the mound, diameters of about 22x19 m, rim width of about 1 m and depth established on profiles ranging from 0.60 m to 1 m. It seems to have been interrupted to the north along a length of about 6 m (C. Schuster *et alii* 2011, p. 21). The Valea Lupului ditch located on the periphery of the mound was 60x57 m in diameter, rim width of 2.3 - 3 m and depth of 1.60 m (M. Dinu 1959a, 1959b). The ditch from Galați was also located on the periphery of the mound, 32.4x29.8 m in diameter (NS-EW), 0.8-1 m wide and 0.60 m deep (M. Brudiu 2003, p. 60). In the area it delimits, 11 Monteoru IIb/early Noua graves and a Turkic one have been found (M. Brudiu 2003, p. 59 and following, fig. 16B). We do not rule out the probability that the rectangular pit located in the centre should be the initial burial for which the ditch was dug, which has preserved no human bones or other artefacts and which is

considered a cenotaph (M. Brudiu 2003, p. 59-60). Such an arrangement was discovered during the preventive excavations carried out at Aliman (Constanța County) in 2019¹¹.

The circular ditches (sometimes doubled by stone rings/cromlechs) with openings/breaks suggesting an entrance are well-known in the tumular complexes east of the Prut (C. Schuster *et alii* 2011, p. 61; Y. Rassamakin 2011) and in the area of the Corded Ware pottery culture in Central Europe (J. Czebreszuk, M. Szmyt 2011). In Bulgaria, there is the central grave of Drazhevo surrounded by a ring made of stones, which was about 11 m in diameter and had an entrance/break (I. Iliev, St. Bakardzhiev 2018, p. 326).

Of the subadult graves investigated in the *Prahova area*, those found at Târgșoru Vechi/Gr.10 (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a) or Ploiești-Triaș - Mound II/Gr.15, Gr.20, Gr.21 (E. Comșa 1989) have inventories. The individual in Gr.10 from Târgșoru Vechi had a necklace made up of 7 perforated fox and dog canines (fig. 5; tab. 2). Strings or isolated items from dog and fox, boar canines or more rarely molars are common in other tumuli as well, such as those from Smeeni/Gr.19B (N. Simache, V. Teodorescu 1962), Glăvănești Vechi T.I-1949/Gr.17 (E. Comșa 1987, p. 376, fig. 11/4), Sultana T.I/1961 (S. Morintz, B. Ionescu 1968, p. 116), Ploiești-Triaș T.II/Gr.19 (E. Comșa 1989, p. 185; A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013, pl. 16/9), Chilia Veche-Ciorticut T.I/Gr.75 (I. Vasiliu 1995a, p. 53, pl. III), Luncavița-Drumul Vacilor T.I/Gr.6 (I. Vasiliu 1995b, p. 104, pl. IV/4), Vlădești (M. Brudiu 2003, p. 68, fig. 32/3), Platonești (E. Rența 2016, p. 120). Such a string was also found in the flat grave from Șoimești-Merez (A. Frînculeasa, D. Garvăn 2017). Perforated canines are to be encountered in Glina settlements as well (R. Băjenaru 2014; M. Mărgărit, R. Băjenaru 2019). In Transylvania, such items occur in funerary contexts like Livezile from Ampoița, Țelna-Rupturi (H. Ciugudean 1996, p. 92, fig. 90/2) or in the contemporary settlement of Livezile-Baia (H. Ciugudean 1996, p. 92, fig. 17/3-4), but also in Schneckenberg (A. Prox 1941, taf. 33/3-6, 34/14) or Jigodin (P. Roman *et alii* 1992) sites.

Such pendants and strings are to be found in the entire eastern tumular area, from east of the Prut (S. Ivanova, G. Toshev 2015, p. 372, fig. 25/13), north of the Black Sea (E. Kaiser 2003, fig. 75; V. Otroshchenko 2013, fig. 1/26), as far as north of the Caucasus (N. Shishlina 2008, fig. 58, 65). They also occur in Bulgaria at Goran Slatina (G. Kitov *et alii* 1991, p. 59, fig. 35), in the Corded Ware culture (P. Włodarczak 2006; P. Włodarczak *et alii* 2016, fig. 11) and Baden funerary features (C. Sachße 2010).

¹¹ Information provided by C.E. Ștefan, to whom we are thankful.



Fig. 5. Canine necklace found in grave 10 from Târgșoru Vechi.
Colierul din canini descoperit în mormântul 10 de la Târgșoru Vechi.

No. item	Segment	Species	Dimensions (in mm)	Observations
1.	Canine	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	28.8×6.6×4.2	hole in the root
2.	Canine	<i>Canis familiaris</i>	27.9×7.9×6.3	hole in the root
3.	Canine	<i>Canis familiaris</i>	27.5×8.6×5.85	hole in the root
4.	Canine	<i>Canis familiaris</i>	32.4×7.3×6	hole in the root
5.	Canine	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	28.9×6.53×4.2	hole in the root
6.	Canine	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	25.8×5.95×4.1	occlusal surface of the tooth is broken longitudinally, hole is in the root
7.	Canine	<i>Canis familiaris</i>	24×7.2×6.4	broken at the root level where hole marks are noticeable

Tab. 2. Synthetic data regarding the perforated canines found in Gr.10A.
Date sintetice privind caninii perforați descoperiți în M.10A.

At Târgșoru Vechi such items occur in association with the youngest individual. At Smeeni, they are placed around the subadult's neck, although he was buried next to an adult (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017b, p. 63). At Glăvănești Vechi, T.I-1949/Gr.17 belongs to a 2-year-old child who wore an animal molar with perforated root (E. Comșa 1987, p. 376, fig. 11/4), whereas at Sultana, a grave was investigated, in which a child had a necklace consisting of 'five perforated animal fangs' (S. Morintz, B. Ionescu 1968, p. 116). In Hungary we should mention the finds from Ketegyhaza, tumulus 3/b, in which there was a child's grave (Gr.1) with 4 molars perforated in the root area (J. Ecsedy 1979, p. 25, fig. 16/4). In the same locality, in tumulus 3, Gr.7 belonging to a child, which was the primary burial, there were 43 perforated molars (J. Ecsedy 1979, p.22-23, board 6). Eight canine and molar items occur in another subadult grave investigated at Pysarivka (the Dniester basin) (K. Harat *et alii* 2014, p. 120, 112/fig.2.8.4:4). Elements of initiation rituals associating the dog or wolf with the subadults (D.W. Anthony, D.R. Brown 2017) might be found within the Yamnaya cultural traditions.

The association of cord decorated pottery with the hair ring can be encountered in children's graves at Ploiești-*Triaj* (E. Comșa 1989). Corded ware is also present in Gr.2/T.IV of Blejoi, attributed to an *Infans* (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a). Such vessels also occur in children's graves at Gurbănești (D.V. Rosseti 1959) or in Gr.12 in the mound of Valea Lupului-*Fabrica chimică* (M. Dinu 1959a, p. 251, fig. 7). It is to be mentioned that no vessels have been found in Yamnaya graves attributed to adults, investigated in the *Prahova area*.

Cord decorated pottery has much earlier origins which bring one to the North-Pontic area in the fifth millennium BC (N.S. Kotova 2010, p. 76). Considered an allogeneic presence in the local environment, this type of pottery occurs in the Lower Danube as early as the last part of the fifth millennium BC, in full evolution of the Cucuteni, Gumelnița cultures and later in Cernavoda I sites (A. Reingruber, J. Rassamakin 2016). It is also present in the chronological horizon preceding the emergence of Yamnaya burials in the Lower Danube (A. Bulatović 2014, p. 116 and following; V. Heyd 2016, abb. 8), even in graves that might date to the end of the fourth millennium BC (possibly the beginning of the next), namely those from Brăilița (N. Harțușe 2002), in Coțofeni settlements (P. Roman 1976, p. 99-100), and in the Horodiștea culture (Gh. Dumitroaia 2000; F. Burtănescu 2002) and Foltești (M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița, M. Dinu 1974). Corded ware also occurs in the site of Celei, probably in the Ezero occupation horizon (E. Bujor 1967, p. 214). We could also mention the discovery from Srbski Krstur, in a mound connected to the Coțofeni cultural horizon (A. Bulatović 2014, p. 105, note 6, fig. 2/20).

Reaching the chronological segment in which Yamnaya funerary features dominate the West-Pontic area, corded ware is to be encountered in tumular graves (Ploiești-*Triaj*, Blejoi, Coslogeni, Grivița, Liești-*Arbănașu*, Valea Lupului, Bolotești, Viile, Slobozia-Hănești, Corlăteni, Independența, Hârșova, Izvoarele, Medgidia, Milostea, Éresteghin-Moacșa), flat graves (Lișcoteanca), in contemporary settlements (Moara Vlăsiei, Șoimești, Boldu, Coșereni, Buziaș, Jigodin, Bogdănești, Foltești) and caves (Igrița) (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015a; 2019b). They are also present in the Tisa basin at Buj-Baba, Tiszabábolna, Békésszentandrás, Nagyhalász-Királyhalom, Halmaj-Vasonca (J. Dani 2011, p. 33-34, fig. 9, 26), as well as south of the Danube at Tarnovo or Drazhevo (Y. Panayotov 1989, fig. 50; I. Iliev, St. Bakardzhiev 2018, p. 327; St. Alexandrov 2019, pl. VII/9). We should also mention the Mokranjske stene find in a Coțofeni-Kostolac cultural context (A. Bulatović, A. Kapuran 2016, pl. 3/2-13).

As regards the association of pottery with the subadult graves, we should say that in both Gr.21 and Gr.29 from Smeeni a bowl was found, whereas in Gr.12 and Gr.21 there was ochre as well (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017b). Since pottery (the corded ware one but also the local one) is not particularly common in the tumular graves on the Lower Danube (F. Burtănescu 2002, p. 248; R.-M. Teodorescu 2011, p. 233; B. Preda 2017, p. 198), the correlation between subadult graves and these containers may acquire certain relevance. In the Prut-Dniester interfluve, pottery occurs in slightly over 20% of the graves (V. Dergacev 1994, p. 125). As compared to the corded ware, the local one is prevalent both north of the Danube (V. Heyd 2011, p. 540) and south of the river (St. Alexandrov, E. Kaiser 2016, p. 365) and in the Hungarian Plain (J. Dani 2011).

Hair rings have been found in subadult graves on the Lower Danube (E. Kaiser, K. Winger 2015; A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015a; 2019b; T. Valchev, Z. Blazheska 2019) and in the Hungarian Plain, including east of the Prut (S. Ivanova 2003, p. 161). North of the Danube, we should mention the two graves from Ploiești-*Triaj*, Gr.1/T.II from Verbița (D. Berciu, P. Roman 1984, p. 16, fig. 1/3) or Gr.1 in *Movila Mare* from Sultana with two copper items (D. Șerbănescu, A. Comșa 2012, p. 24). Hair rings are present in the inventory of approximately 5% of the Yamnaya graves researched on the Romanian territory (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b). This may also be an observation that points to the status of some of the subadults.

◆Some ideas and conclusions

The re-establishment of European society on other foundations, as a result of a migration phenomenon originating in the North-Pontic area due to the *Kurgan waves*, is a theory presented by M. Gimbutas more than half a century ago. Though apparently forgotten/ignored somewhere in the basement of history, in recent years the ideas of the well-known scholar have been reformulated and commercially wrapped with the results of the palaeogenetic and isotopic investigations. The Yamnaya phenomenon has rapidly become a trending topic, exploited by researchers in various fields, followed/accompanied by archaeologists that seem in quite a hurry to obtain answers good enough to be published in impact journals. As the archaeological excavation is an activity that tends to be pushed into the background, the dusty repositories in Eastern Europe with their skeletons that, up until yesterday, had been anonymous, have now become spaces in which treasures worth exploring are lying. Molars and temporals have become stars and local archaeologists and anthropologists are sample suppliers.

X. Imposing and then maintaining/perpetuating the social foundations of an allogeneous group beyond the area of origin and the immediate present as well is obviously a topic worth investigating. The diffusion of the Yamnaya phenomenon to the west is a fact in which the ideological foundation seems to have been a binder and an anchor set in the heart of Europe beyond the coveted green pastures, the source/inflection point which supposedly generated the movement of this population with a pastoral economy to the west, north and south-east of Europe.

Xx. K. Kristiansen established the Yamnaya – Corded Ware – pre-Germanic ancestry. Simplifying, the conclusion is that the Yamnaya men, having just reached the west of Europe, married local women and, several generations later, the fruit of this *hybridization* would be the emergence of the Corded Ware and of a new dialect - *Pre-Proto-Germanic* (K. Kristiansen *et alii* 2017). If women are seen as the origin of the pottery characterizing this cultural tradition (K. Kristiansen *et alii* 2017), the ideological element transformed at the basis of the Corded

Ware society is reflected in the relevance and unity of burial practices (K. Kristiansen 2017), especially as regards the men graves (Q. Bourgeois, E. Kroon 2017), although this does not exclude the presence of local aspects (M. Furholt 2014). The small gap between the onset of the two cultural phenomena (the Yamnaya and the Corded Ware) in the areas analyzed (not of origin) might point to a very fast *hybridization* phenomenon, with rather different consequences.

Xxx. Having a common core with the Corded Ware (M.E Allentoft *et alii* 2015; W. Haak *et alii* 2015; I. Mathieson *et alii* 2018), the Yamnaya does not appear to have altered so deeply in the West-Pontic as to speak of another culture. However, regional versions have been defined, such as the Dniestrean or Bugeac (V. Dergacev 1994; S. Ivanova 2013). The local cultural element seems to have survived and intersected with the Yamnaya ritual (see the occurrence of Cucuteni-Tripolie CII bowls, Globular Amphora, Cernavoda II, Coțofeni, Ezero, Michalic, Livezile, Makó, Somogyvár etc. vessels in grave inventories) (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015a), which naturally has lent a certain particularity to the Yamnaya phenomenon (S. Ivanova 2013; P. Włodarczak 2017).

Xxxx. If the local/Neolithic man's fate seems sealed, witnessing a genuine extinction at times (V. Heyd 2019), the woman appears to pass through this turbulent and revolutionary age influencing even the linguistic framework by preserving elements of the local corpus reflected in words with local origins specific to the Neolithic agrarian society (R. Iversen, G. Kroonen 2017; K. Kristiansen 2017).

Xxxxx. Though not so common, the Yamnaya burials dedicated to adult women become relevant through their exceptionality. In tumulus IV from Blejoi, in Gr.1, four hair rings have been found. It is the Yamnaya burial with the largest number of such items investigated in a tumulus located north of the Lower Danube (pl. 8/2). In the same pit, one level below, there is an *Infans* next to whom lay a cord-decorated vessel. In this tumulus, the primary burial is dedicated to an *Infans*. The adult individual's age rules out a mother-child relationship, not a (blood) relation, though (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b). Furthermore, there are burials of adult women which do not comply with the Yamnaya ritual. Here we should mention two burials from Blejoi T.I/Gr.1 (E. Paveleț 2007) and Târgșoru Vechi-Mănăstire (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015b) or Gr.13 from Smeeni (A. Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017, p. 60, pl. 34). Here the Yamnaya communities meet the local cultural fund. Nearby, in the hilly area of Șoimești, there is the grave of an adult woman, of delicate constitution, with an inventory that points to this coexistence and interaction (A. Frînculeasa, D. Garvăn 2017). We should also mention that the only grave with a wagon known on the Lower Danube, found at Plachidol I, has been attributed to a woman (Y. Panayotov 1989, p. 98, fig. 64).

Xxxxxx. The tumulus seems a monument and, at the same time, a representation of the ideological power of this intrusive group. The establishment of lineage could ensure the passage in time and space of the unity of tradition and the relevance of ideology. At the top of the social pyramid stood a male figure symbolically endowed with the power of representing the continuity, stability, cohesion and unity of society. The homogeneity of this funerary phenomenon was visible for more than half a millennium and preserved the same coordinates until the end of the evolution of this tradition. We can assume that heredity/descendance was an important landmark in the Yamnaya society. Here palaeogenetics can lift the veil and illuminate the archaeological information. Beyond migration, before tracing transcontinental routes, we must still understand the social relationships within this cultural phenomenon and its interaction with the world around. Elements of Yamnaya ideology stood the test of time

and were passed on, while the role played by the male individual at the top of the social pyramid was to cross the ages beyond this phenomenon until the historical times.

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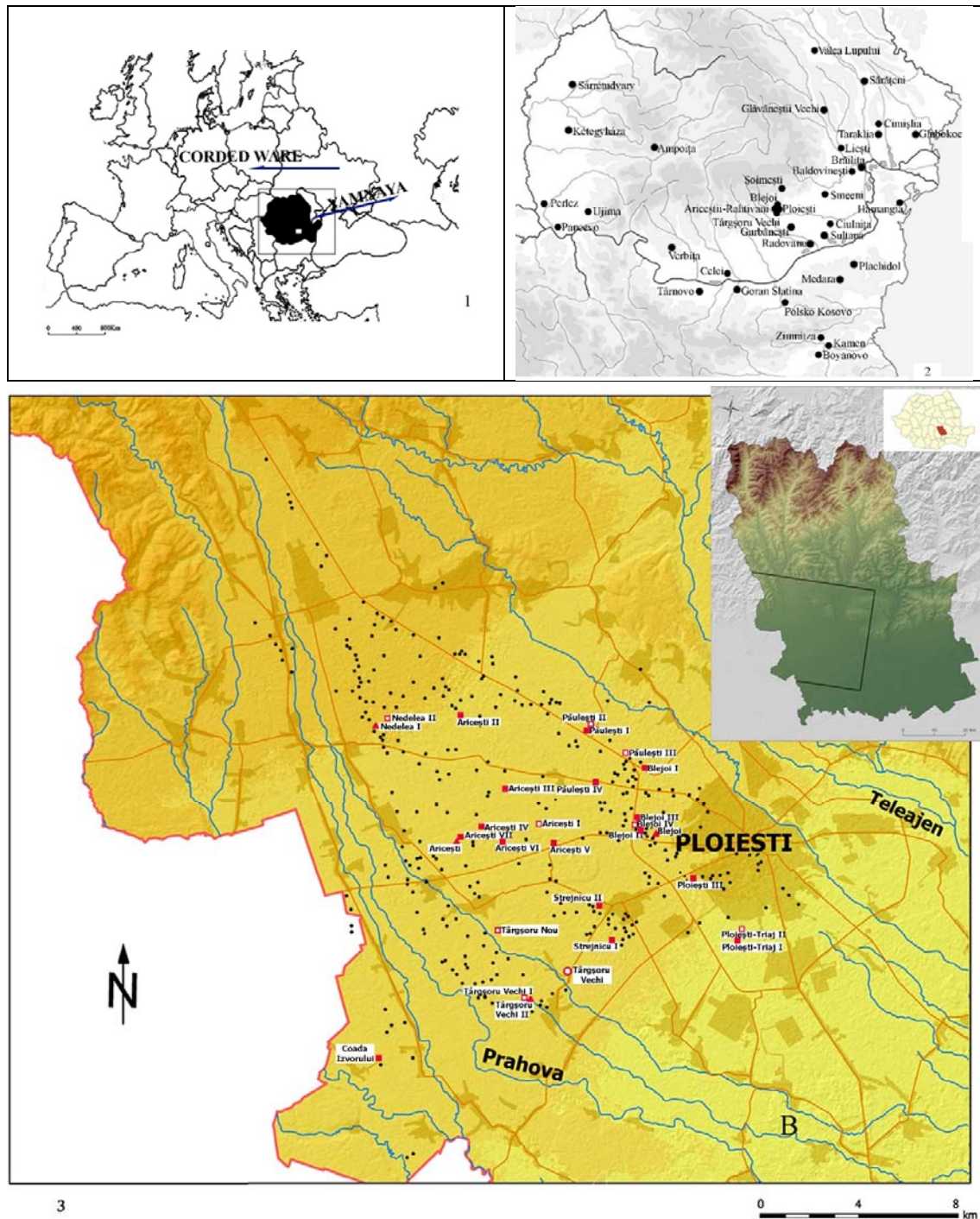
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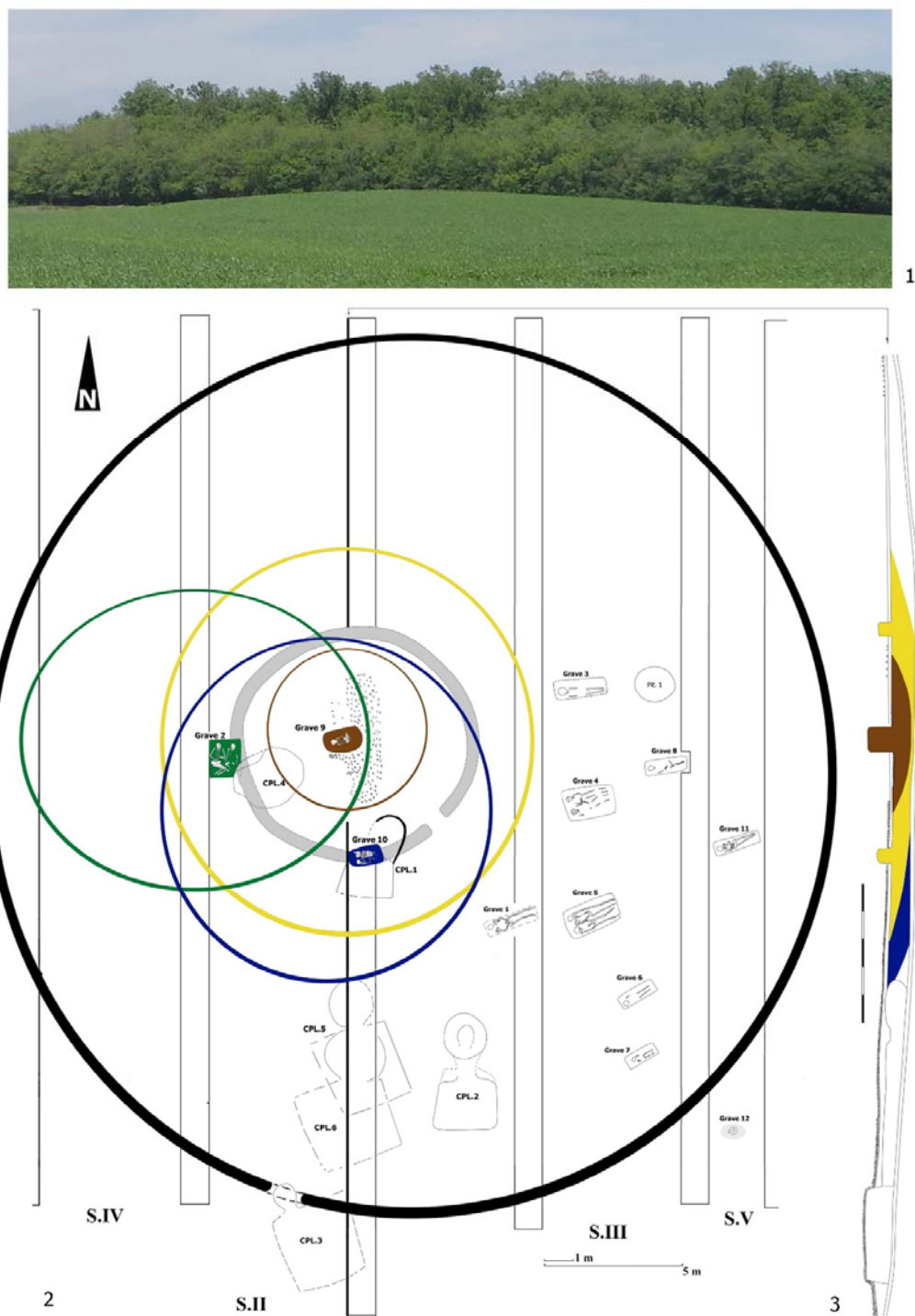
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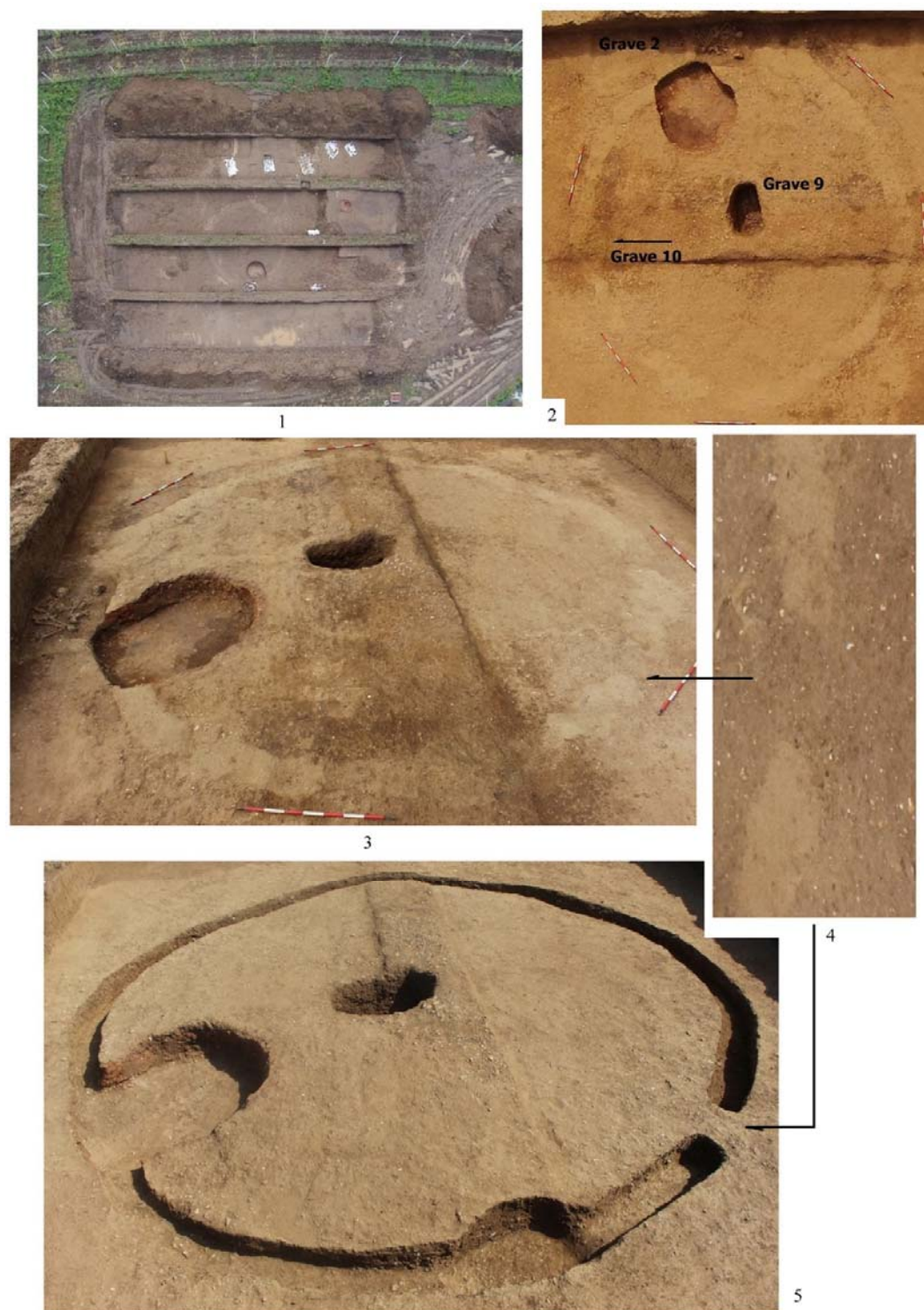
Pl. 1. Romania map and the location of the analysed region (1); map of the main discoveries mentioned in the text (2); the Prahova area—investigated mounds (squares) containing burials of subadults assigned to Yamnaya (empty squares); filled circles – mapped tumuli; triangles—investigated tumuli where no burials were found (3).

Harta României și poziția zonei analizate (1); harta cu principalele descoperiri menționate în text (2); *arealul* Prahova – tumulii cercetați (pătrate) ce conțin morminte de subadulți atribuite culturii Yamnaya (pătrate goale); cercuri pline – tumulii cartăți; triunghiuri – tumuli cercetați în care nu au fost descoperite morminte (3).



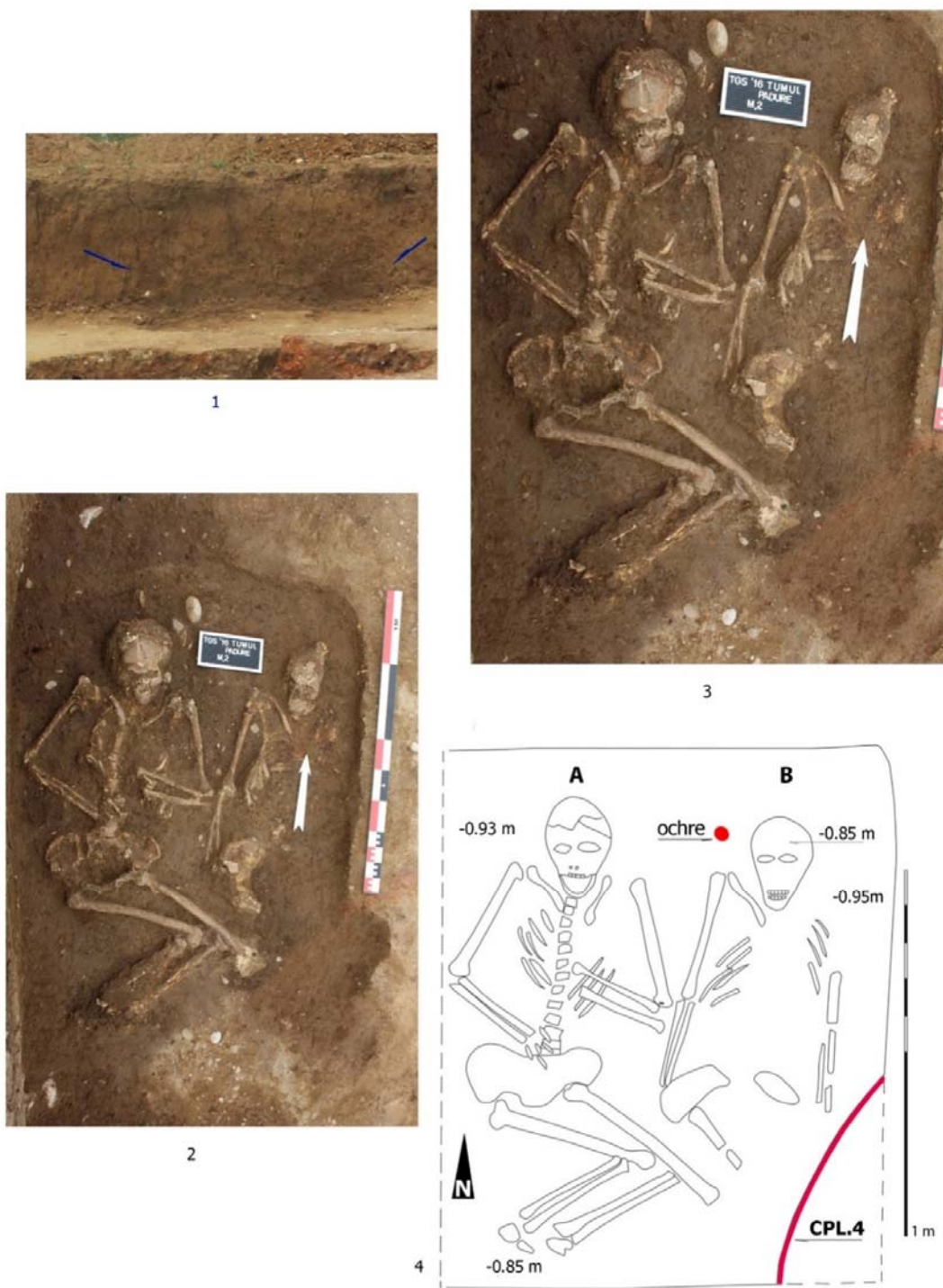
Pl. 2. Târgșoru Vechi: photo of the mound before research (1); general plan of the mound (2) and the eastern stratigraphic profile of trench II (3).

Târgșoru Vechi: imagine cu tumulul înainte de cercetare (1); planul general al tumulului (2) și profilul stratigrafic de est al șanțului II (3).



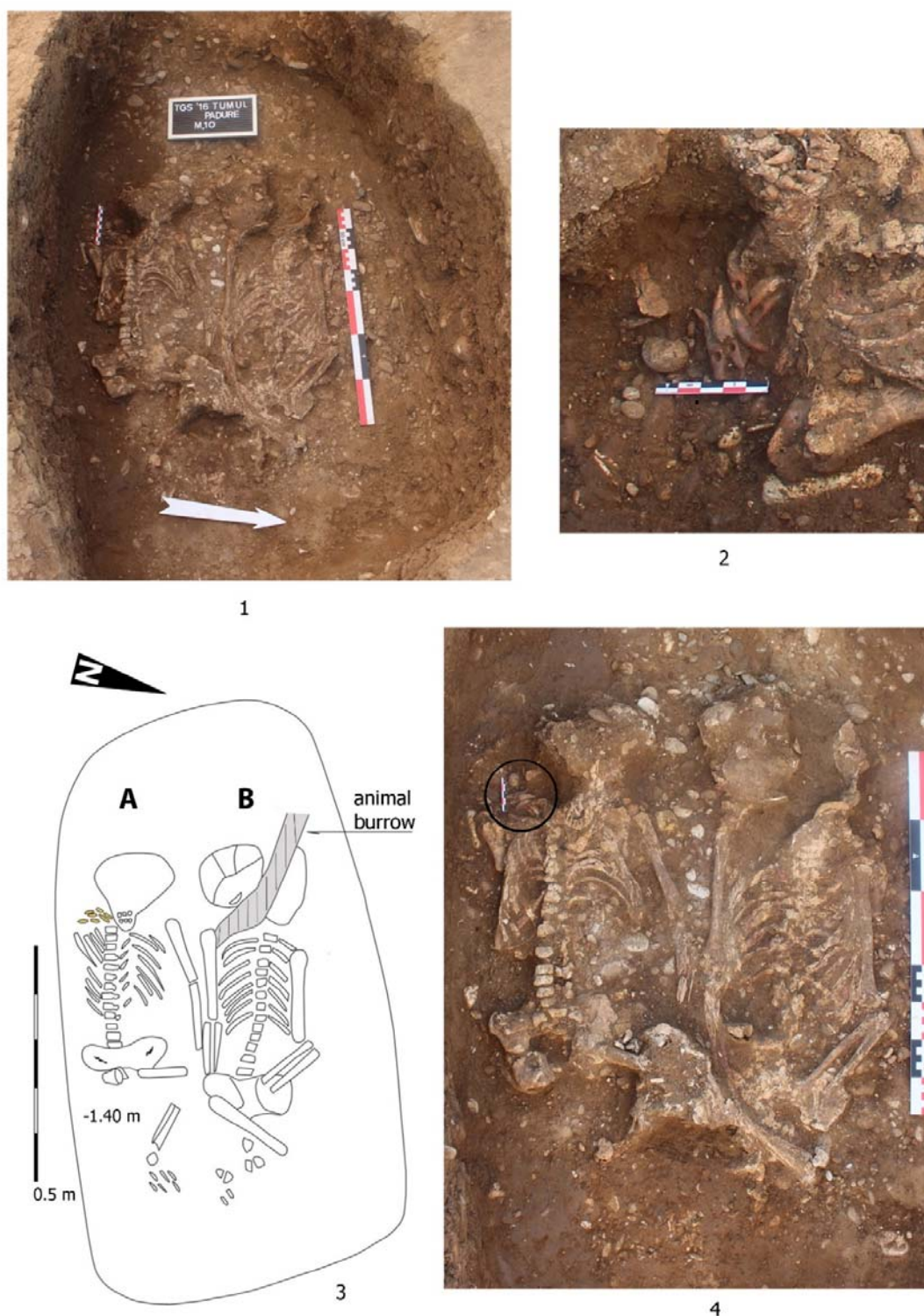
Pl. 3. Târgșoru Vechi: aerial photos taken during the research (1) of the circular ditch and positioning of Yamnaya graves (2); shots of the investigated circular ditch (2-3, 5); details with the "entrance" (3-5).

Târgșoru Vechi: imagini aeriene din timpul cercetării (1) cu șanțul circular și poziționarea mormintelor Yamnaya (2); cadre cu șanțul circular cercetat (2-3, 5); detalii cu „intrarea” (3-5).



Pl. 4. Târgșoru Vechi: grave 2 (2-4) and detail of the western profile of trench II (1) (the arrows indicate the limits of the funeral pit).

Târgșoru Vechi: mormântul 2 (2-4) și detaliu cu profilul de vest al șanțului II (1) (săgețile indică limitele gropii funerare).



Pl. 5. Târgșoru Vechi: grave 10 (1); detail of mammalian canines *in situ* (2) and their placement near individual A (3-4).

Târgșoru Vechi: mormântul 10 (1); detaliu cu canini de mamifere *in situ* (2), cu poziționarea lor lângă individul A (3-4).



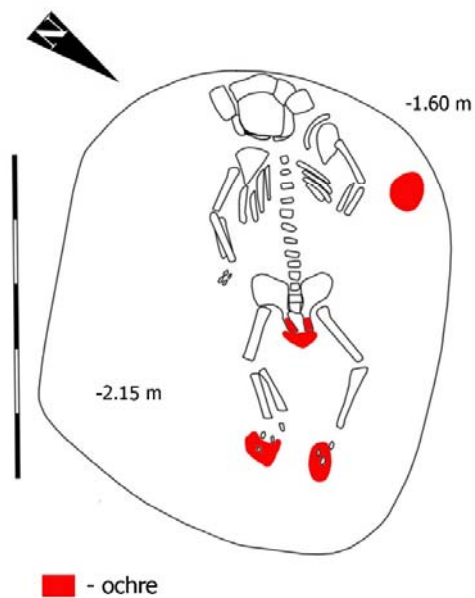
Pl. 6. Târgșoru Vechi: grave 9; detail of the ochre lump (a), found near the skull of the deceased (1).
Târgșoru Vechi: mormântul 9; detaliu cu bulgărele de ocru (a), descoperit lângă craniul defunctului (1).



PL. 7. Târğșoru Vechi: details of stratigraphic profiles.
Târğșoru Vechi: detalii ale profilelor stratigrafice.



1

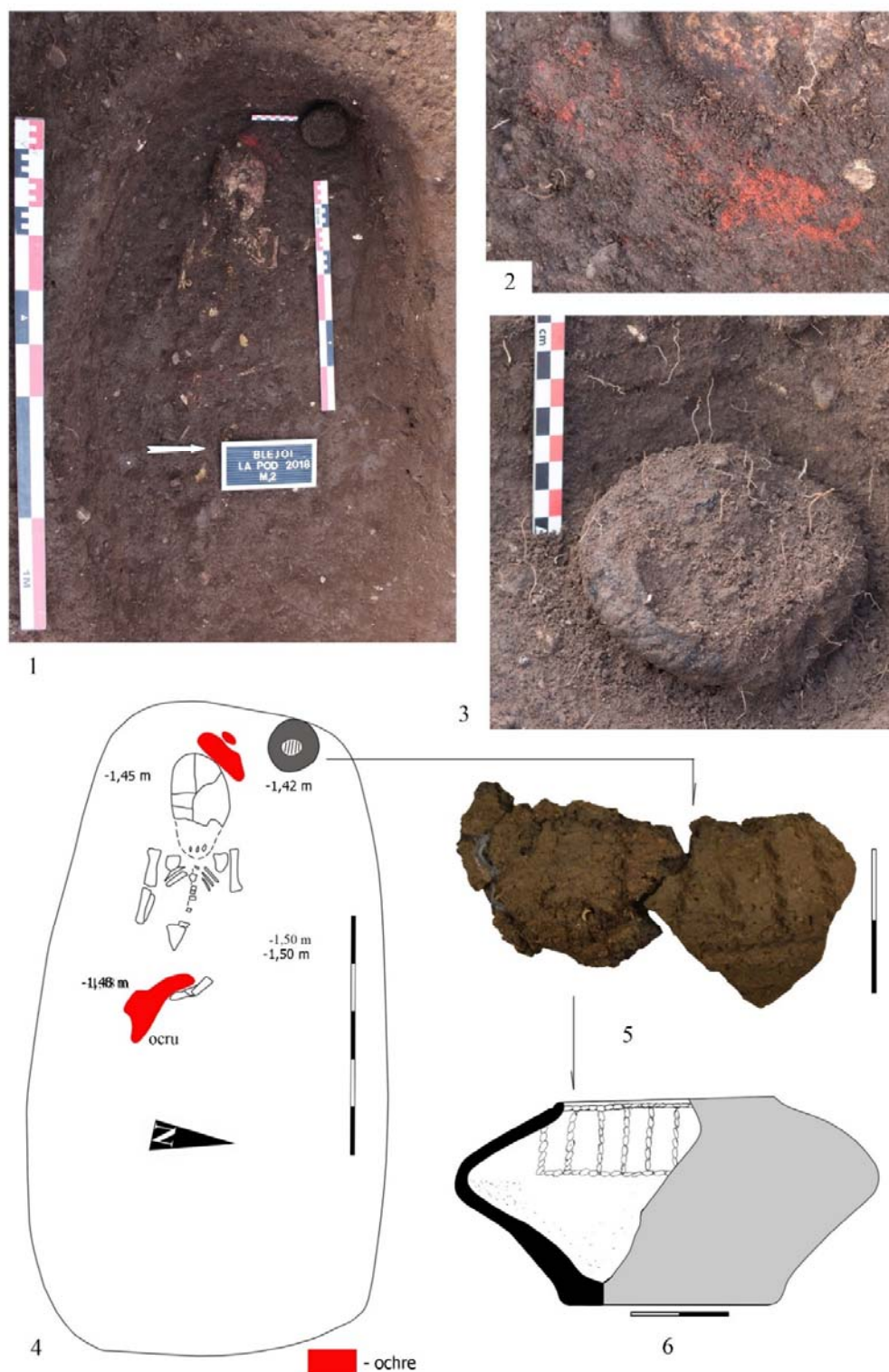


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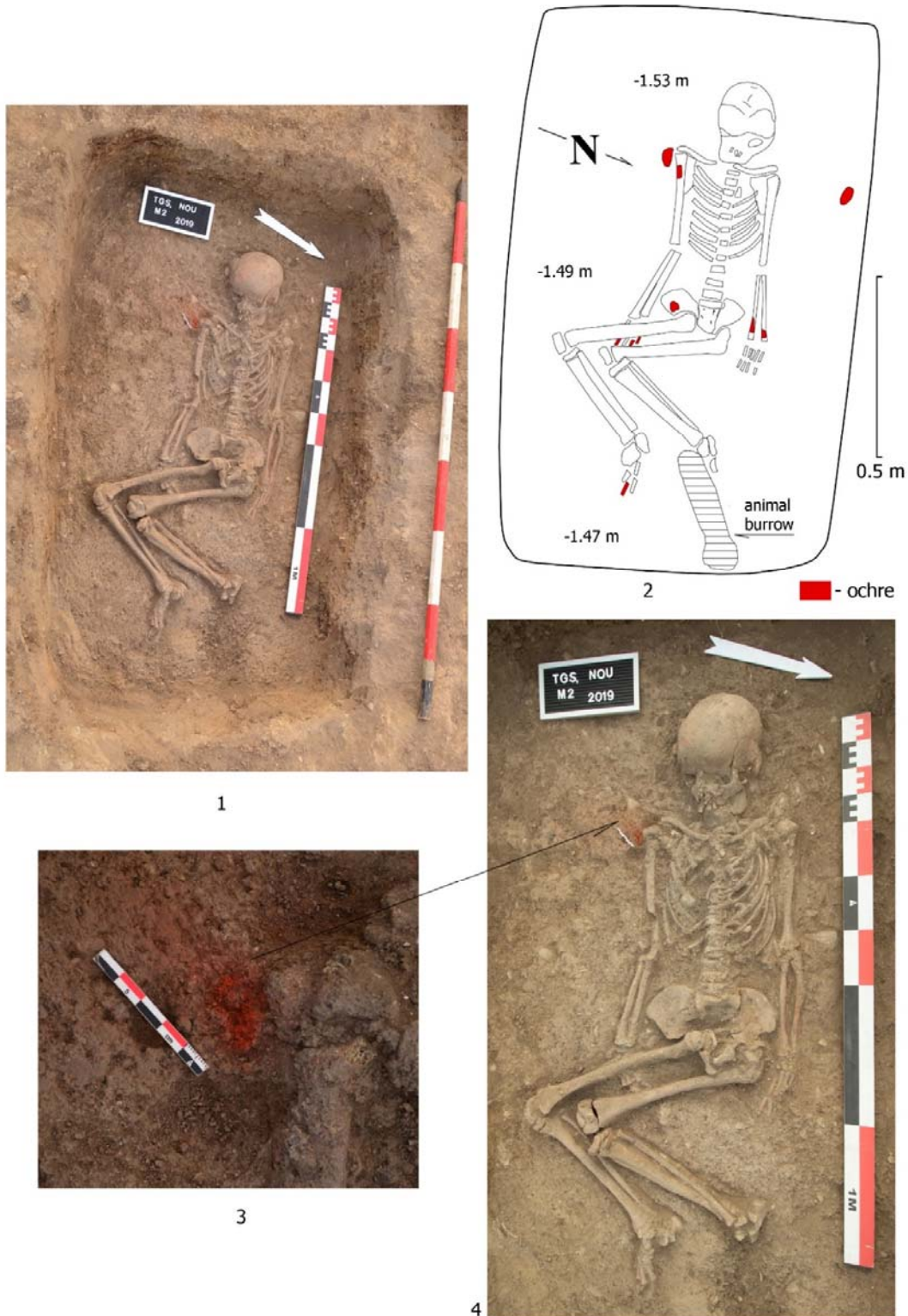
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Pl. 8. Blejoi, tumulus IV: grave 1 (1) and the hair rings discovered (2); grave 3 (3-4).
Blejoi, tumulul IV: mormântul 1 (1) și inelele de buclă descoperite (2); mormântul 3 (3-4).



Pl. 9. Blejoi, tumulus IV: grave 2 (1, 4); details of the ochre (2) and the corded ware bowl *in situ* (3); corded ware bowl found in grave 2 (5-6).

Blejoi, tumulul IV: mormântul 2 (1, 4); detalii cu ocrul (2) și vasul șnurat *in situ* (3); vasul șnurat descoperit în mormântul 2 (5-6).



Pl. 10. Târgșoru Nou: grave 2 (1-2, 4) and detail of the ochre lump near the right shoulder of the deceased (3).

Târgșoru Nou: mormântul 2 (1-2, 4) și detaliu cu bulgărele de ocru prezent lângă umărul drept al defunctului (3).



1

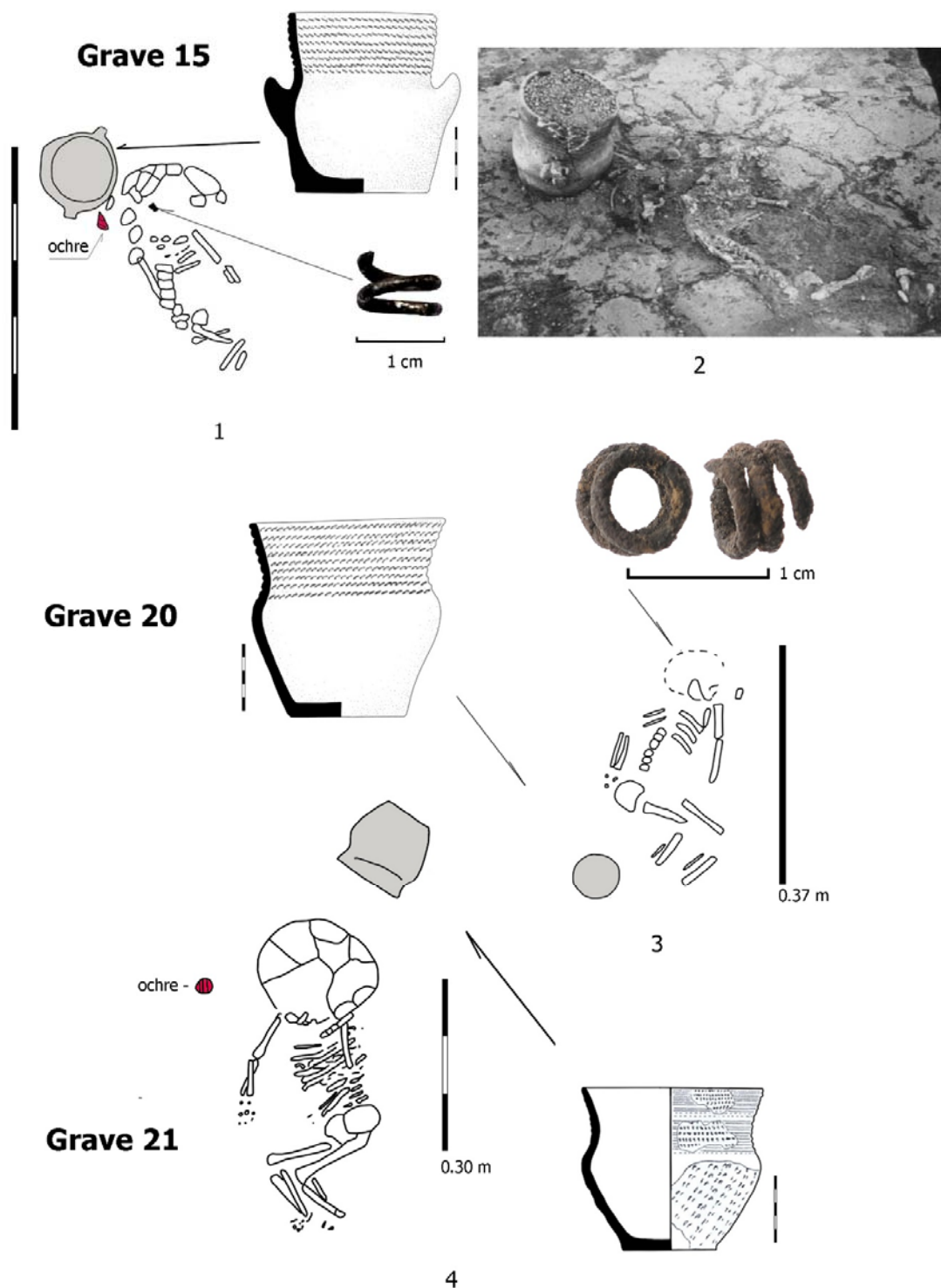


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3

Pl. 11. Nedelea: grave 1 (1-3) with the excavated gravel placed on the edge of the funeral pit (1).
Nedelea: mormântul 1 (1-3) cu pietrișul excavat și așezat pe marginea gropii funerare (1).



Pl. 12. Ploiești-Triaș - Mound II: graves of subadults and their grave goods; photo of grave 15 and the bowl *in situ* (2) (archives of the IAB).

Ploiești-Triaș - Mound II: morminte de subadulți și inventarul acestora; fotografie cu mormântul 15 și vasul *in situ* (2) (arhiva IAB).