

ZIRIDAVA  
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### ZIRIDAVA STUDIA ARCHAEOLOGICA

Any correspondence will be sent to the editor:

Museum Arad

Piata George Enescu 1, 310131 Arad, RO

e-mail: ziridava2012@gmail.com

The content of the papers totally involve the responsibility of the authors.

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# Earthen burial mounds and the Coțofeni Culture south of the Carpathians. The archaeological research in Ariceștii-Rahtivani – *Movila pe Răzoare*\*

Alin Frînculeasa

**Abstract:** Inside an earthen mound from the municipality of Ariceștii-Rahtivani (Prahova County), researched in 2016, archaeologists discovered a grave containing human skeletal remains from four individuals, numerous ornaments made of copper, shells, bone, several flint tools, but also a pot specific to the Coțofeni Culture. Taking this burial with exceptional grave goods as a starting point, this study will focus on analysing the relation of the Coțofeni communities with the North-Danubian tumular phenomenon. One should mention that in Muntenia the Coțofeni Culture is a novel presence and the discovered materials are rather interpreted as *imports* to the local cultural environment. In order to contextualize this discovery I shall provide an overview of the cultural background during the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC at the Lower Danube and the dynamic of the West-Pontic funerary tumular phenomenon.

**Keywords:** burial mound; grave; Coțofeni; ornaments; the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC.

## Introduction

In a recently published study, I have focused on the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC north of the Lower Danube from the perspective of a burial mound researched in the municipality of Ploiești (Prahova County). On that occasion, I have noted the dynamic development of the area, generated by the constant interaction between the human communities at the Lower Danube and the North-Pontic steppe world<sup>1</sup>. I shall continue to explore this chronological phase turning attention to other horizons, but having the same starting point of the analysis – the *Prahova Area*<sup>2</sup>. The studied region is located in the Romanian Plain (more precisely Ploiești Plain), in the Prahova – Teleajen interfluve (Pl. 19/3). The two rivers that cross the Southern Carpathians provided means of communication between the intra-Carpathian area and Muntenia over time<sup>3</sup>. More than 350 burial mounds<sup>4</sup> have been identified in the *Prahova Area*, the northernmost ones located upriver along the Prahova River as far as the point where the water has created a corridor between the sub-Carpathian hills, near the municipality of Câmpina<sup>5</sup>. An earthen burial mound researched in 2016 in the municipality of Ariceștii-Rahtivani (Prahova County) becomes relevant in this new approach<sup>6</sup>. Out of the more than 100 burial mounds identified in the area of the municipality of Ariceștii-Rahtivani<sup>7</sup>, 12 have been investigated (Pl. 19/3), located in the villages of Ariceștii-Rahtivani, Nedelea, and Târgșoru Nou<sup>8</sup>.

## The second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC: the background – a short overview

During the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, the north-west-Pontic area and the Lower Danube were going through a supra-regional cultural process reverberating further towards the southern and

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\* English translation: Ana M. Gruia.

<sup>1</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a.

<sup>2</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017a.

<sup>3</sup> Preda-Bălănică *et al.* 2019, 178.

<sup>4</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017a; 2018, 77, footnote 4.

<sup>5</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017d.

<sup>7</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2020, pl. 1/2.

<sup>8</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa 2014; Frînculeasa 2015; Frînculeasa 2019a; Frînculeasa 2020; Frînculeasa 2007; Frînculeasa 2019; Frînculeasa 2020a.

central parts of Europe. Prestige goods such as metal weapons, ornaments (made of silver, copper, shell) were (re)distributed over wide areas/long distances, marks of an intense interaction between the two regions. One can include here certain pots with more or less characteristic shapes as well as the presence of cord decorated pottery. Though the debates on the topic are still complicated, one can also mention horse domestication and the introduction of wagons, two elements that have contributed to a faster and geographically wider distribution of certain ideas and innovations. Overarching all these elements is the presence of burial mounds and their characteristics pertaining to ritual practice and cultural traditions, both local and allogeneous. The burial mounds feature as reinterpretations of the access into the world of the dead and at the same time they mark the era and represent the benchmark of an adjustment of the social background.

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Following the end of development of cultures such as Cernavoda I and Cucuteni B/Cucuteni B-Cernavoda I/Tripolie CI<sup>9</sup> around the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, the extra-Carpathian North-Danubian world seemed unstructured. Few settlements have been systematically researched and the results can hardly be deemed relevant<sup>10</sup>. The cultural background that characterizes the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in the extra- and intra-Carpathian areas has been unevenly approached. Researchers have shown constant interest in the Coțofeni Culture, but only few systematic researches and discoveries coming from surface surveys are available for the research of the post-Cucuteni B/Tripolie CI extra-Carpathian area. As for the dynamic of the sites, one notes the discrepancy between the two analysed areas (Fig. 1/2–3). At the same time, in South Moldavia and Muntenia the decline in the number of settlements also noted for the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium continued<sup>11</sup>:

East of the Carpathians, in the northern half of the area, almost 200 places with post Cucuteni B pottery have been identified, known under the name of Horodișteea-Erbiceni or Foltești more to the south<sup>12</sup>. The main characteristics of these finds are the persistence of painting and the presence of cord decoration<sup>13</sup>. Less than 30 Foltești II sites have been identified in the southern half of Moldavia; none has revealed painted pottery and very few feature cord decoration<sup>14</sup>. Though small, the actual number of such sites cannot be accurately estimated as some are included in the Horodișteea-Foltești and others in the Foltești II-Cernavoda II cultural complexes<sup>15</sup>. Several post-Cucuteni B burials that can be connected to the Tripolie CII groups have been excavated west of the Prut River<sup>16</sup>.

Data are available regarding approximately 20 Cernavoda II settlements in South Moldavia, Muntenia, and Dobruja<sup>17</sup>. Funerary finds have also been signaled in Brăilița, Gumelnița, or Oltenița<sup>18</sup>. From the same chronological interval needs to be mentioned the flat burial in Pietrele<sup>19</sup>. At least one of the two graves from Cernavoda can be attributed to the Cernavoda I Culture<sup>20</sup>.

Hundreds of sites with Coțofeni pottery have been identified in the intra-Carpathian area, Banat, and Oltenia, but also south of the Danube (in NW Bulgaria)<sup>21</sup>. P. Roman has included 313 spots on the map of Coțofeni discoveries<sup>22</sup>. Subsequently, H. Ciugudean has identified 688 such sites in Transylvania

<sup>9</sup> Manzura 1999; Manzura 2019; Rassamakin 1999; Rassamakin 2012; Lazarovici 2010; Govedarica, Manzura 2011; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c, 76; Munteanu 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Florescu 1965; Morintz, Roman 1968a; Morintz, Roman 1968b; Berciu *et al.* 1973; Petrescu-Dîmbovița 1953; Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Dinu 1974a; Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Dinu 1974b; Dumitroaia 2000, 51; Munteanu 2017; 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

<sup>12</sup> Dinu 1977; Dumitroaia 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Roman 1969; Burtănescu 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Morintz, Roman 1968b.

<sup>15</sup> Berciu *et al.* 1973; Dinu 1977; Dumitroaia 2000; Burtănescu 2002.

<sup>16</sup> Zaharia 1964; Dinu 1977; Batariuc 1983; Mantu 1994; Harțuche 2002; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

<sup>17</sup> Morintz, Roman 1968a; Morintz, Roman 1968b; Berciu *et al.* 1973; Dinu 1977; Șerbănescu, Trohani 1978; Vasiliu 2002; Vlad, Matei 2004, 200; Schuster, Popa 2008; Schuster, Popa 2009; Vernescu 2013; Gavrilă *et al.* 2016; Șerbănescu, Androne 2016a; Frînculeasa 2020a.

<sup>18</sup> Berciu *et al.* 1973, 396; Harțuche 2002; Vernescu 2013; Șerbănescu, Androne 2016a, 154; 2016b, 29, footnote 16.

<sup>19</sup> Hansen 2014, 250, fig. 10–11.

<sup>20</sup> Berciu *et al.* 1973, 395–396; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c, 83.

<sup>21</sup> Roman 1976a; Ciugudean 2000; Alexandrov 2007; Patroi 2016; 2017; Tuțulescu 2016; Kapuran *et al.* 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Roman 1976a, pl. 1.



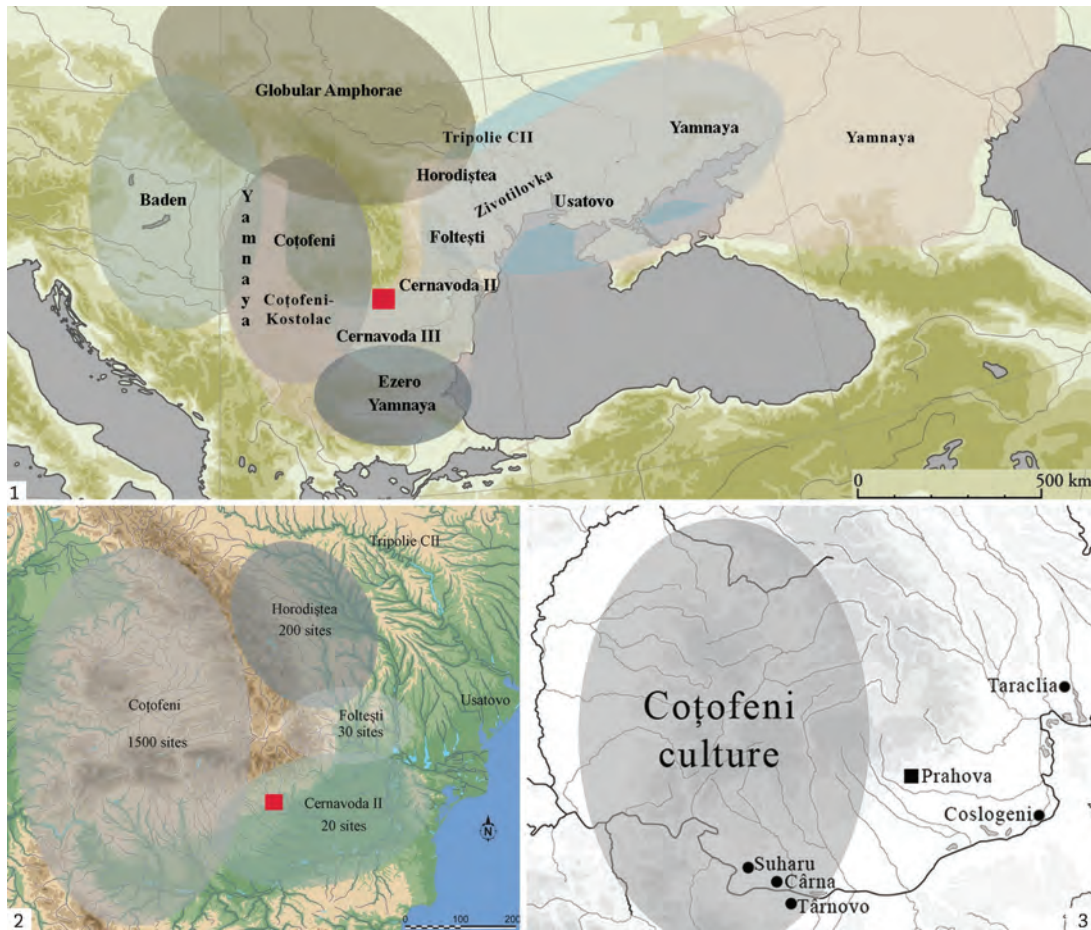


Fig. 1. The cultural dynamic in the North-Pontic and the Lower Danube areas during the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC (1); cultural areas and the correspondence of sites at the Lower Danube in the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (2); the Coțofeni area, the Lower Danube, and the sites where Coțofeni pottery was discovered in burial mounds (3).

and Banat<sup>23</sup>. More recently, F. Gogâltan has mentioned 1500 places of discovery known in 2009<sup>24</sup>. For the area of Oltenia have been mentioned 223 places of discovery of artifacts attributed to the Coțofeni Culture<sup>25</sup>, while 78 Coțofeni-Kostolac settlements are known in East Serbia<sup>26</sup>. One should also add the discoveries made in North-West Bulgaria<sup>27</sup>. Few data are available on the Coțofeni funerary ritual<sup>28</sup>. The excavations in Silvașu de Jos<sup>29</sup> have opened the discussion regarding the association with the burial mounds present in the area of this culture, especially during its final stages<sup>30</sup>.

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As for the post-Cucuteni B/Tripolie CI cultural groups, scholars still face difficulties in going beyond the framework set by the contact chronologies. The absolute dates attributed to the Tripolie CII groups (Horodișteța/Gordinești/Brânzeni) place the development during the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC<sup>31</sup>, despite the fact that their beginning sometimes falls during the first half of the millennium and their end is occasionally placed beyond the start of the subsequent millennium<sup>32</sup>. The same situation

<sup>23</sup> Ciugudean 2000.

<sup>24</sup> Gogâltan 2013, footnote 138.

<sup>25</sup> Patroi 2017.

<sup>26</sup> Kapuran *et al.* 2018, 84.

<sup>27</sup> Alexandrov 2007; Alexandrov 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Ciugudean 2000, 43–44; Nikolova 1995, 274.

<sup>29</sup> Luca *et al.* 2011; Diaconescu, Tincu 2016; Diaconescu 2020.

<sup>30</sup> Popa 2015, 39.

<sup>31</sup> Manzura 2019, 33; Sirbu *et al.* 2020, table 1.

<sup>32</sup> Lazarovici 2010; Nikitin *et al.* 2010; Rassamakin 2012; Diachenko, Harper 2016; Sirbu 2019; Sirbu *et al.* 2020, table 1;

can be noted in the case of the absolute chronology of the Usatovo Group<sup>33</sup>. Only a handful of absolute dates are available for the Zhivotilovka Group<sup>34</sup>. In the absence of stratigraphic delimitations and of a consistent set of absolute dates, the chronological relation between the Usatovo and the Zhivotilovka groups is somehow uncertain<sup>35</sup>, though the latter seems to have started more recently. At the same time, the Zhivotilovka Group coexisted with Tripolie CII, as indicated for example by the tumular grave in Liești<sup>36</sup> and by other funerary features researched east of the Prut River<sup>37</sup>.

Taking the discussion further towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the final phases of development of the Usatovo and/or Zhivotilovka complexes, one can see the emergence of the Bugeac Culture/Group in the Prut-Dniester interfluvium, as part of the Yamnaya phenomenon<sup>38</sup>. Research conducted in the burial mounds attributed to this group has revealed contacts with the Lower Danube Valley, the intra-Carpathian area, and further north with the forest-steppe<sup>39</sup>.

### On rituals and cultural traditions

During the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC three main positions in which the deceased were laid in the grave are attested: lateral-crouching, supine with extended legs, and supine with flexed legs<sup>40</sup>. Besides the burial mound, the lateral-crouching deposition of the deceased represents the main characteristic of the funeral ritual during this period<sup>41</sup>. Other characteristics are the presence of stone rings, the collective burials, the post-mortem manipulation of the bodies, and the complexity of the accompanying grave goods. Present in Maykop-Novosvobodnaia burials<sup>42</sup>, rings made of stone bring one closer to the Usatovo traditions<sup>43</sup>, even though they can also be encountered in Baden cemeteries<sup>44</sup>. Such structures occur both north<sup>45</sup> and south of the Danube<sup>46</sup>. The burials include inventories defining the local imprint, but also some that reflect wide-distance cultural relations/interactions. Three main categories can be discussed: pottery, weapons (copper, flint), and ornaments (silver, copper, shell, bone, clay). Among the items made of metal one should mention daggers, flat and flanged axes, spectacle-shaped pendants, torques, and hair rings, besides tubular items made of copper and *Saltaleoni*<sup>47</sup>. As for the crouched position on the left or right side and its presence in the tumular burials, Y. Rassamakin connects this ritual to the Lower Michaylovka tradition<sup>48</sup>.

Much more rarely one encounters individuals placed in supine position with extended legs<sup>49</sup>, a position that seems to have been a secondary ritual at the Lower Danube<sup>50</sup> but was used for a long period, covering the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the first part of the subsequent millennium<sup>51</sup>. This inhumation ritual inside mounds has been connected to post-Mariupol or Kvityana

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Immel *et al.* 2020, table 1. In the lack of a large dataset, one should avoid using absolute chronological dates with extreme values.

<sup>33</sup> Videiko 1999; Videiko, Petrenko 2003; Petrenko, Kovaljuch 2003, 106, table 4; Ludwig *et al.* 2009; Rassamakin 2012; I. Manzura dates the development of the Usatovo Culture in the third quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (Manzura 2020, 76).

<sup>34</sup> Manzura 2016, 70; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

<sup>35</sup> Manzura 2016, 69–70.

<sup>36</sup> Brudiu 2003; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, fig. 21.

<sup>37</sup> Manzura 2016, 65.

<sup>38</sup> Ivanova 2013; Kley 2017.

<sup>39</sup> Agulnikov 1995; Burtănescu 2002; Brudiu 2003; Heyd 2011, 549; Ivanova 2013; Ivanova, Toshev 2015; Szmyt 2013; Włodarczak 2017, 274; Rassamakin 1994; Rassamakin 1999; Heyd 2011, 542; Heyd 2017; Ivanova 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c; Manzura 2016; Włodarczak 2017.

<sup>40</sup> Rassamakin 2013, 116.

<sup>41</sup> Alexandrov 2011; Horváth *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

<sup>42</sup> Korenevskij 2010.

<sup>43</sup> Rassamakin 2011, 303; Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011, 266.

<sup>44</sup> Sachße 2010.

<sup>45</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014, 193; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 75; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017e.

<sup>46</sup> Alexandrov 2011; Iliev, Bakardzhiev 2018.

<sup>47</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013; Preda 2015.

<sup>48</sup> Rassamakin 1994; Rassamakin 1999; Rassamakin 2013.

<sup>49</sup> Alexandrov 2011; Horváth *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

<sup>50</sup> Burtănescu 2002, 345.

<sup>51</sup> Manzura 2010; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c, 87–88.

traditions<sup>52</sup>. The third position, supine with flexed legs, is typical for the Yamnaya burials<sup>53</sup> and became the ideological mark of these communities that dominated during the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC the steppe landscape between the Caucasus and the Hungarian Plain.

### Chronological background: mound burials

The tumular chronological background can be discussed by analysing the stratigraphy together with the presence inside the mounds of elements of the burial ritual such as the position of the bodies, the grave goods, and implicitly the contact chronology, but also the existence of absolute dates that are no longer unique or rare<sup>54</sup>. One knows of stratigraphic cases when the graves with bodies placed crouched on one side were overlapped by graves with individuals placed in supine position with flexed legs<sup>55</sup>. In the *Prahova Area* this chrono-stratigraphic background is well-defined<sup>56</sup>. Except for Oltenia, such situations are attested throughout the extra-Carpathian area, with the best known examples in Gherăseni, Ciulnița, Baldovinești, Brăilița, Coslogeni, Liești, Holboca, and Corlăteni<sup>57</sup>. From Dobruja one needs to mention the tumular graves researched in Baia, Tulcea-*Sud*, possibly Enisala, but also in Medgidia/T.6<sup>58</sup>. The above-mentioned stratigraphic succession is also present in Hungary<sup>59</sup>, Serbia<sup>60</sup>, and Bulgaria<sup>61</sup>.

Indications from the realm of absolute chronology start to paint a clearer picture of the analysed period. A large number of C14-AMS dates are available from the burial mounds researched in the *Prahova Area* that precede the Yamnaya burial horizon<sup>62</sup>. The dates from the burial mound in Smeeni-*Movila Mare* are also useful for completing the stratigraphy<sup>63</sup>, even if there are no graves preceding the Yamnaya ones, but only Cernavoda II features<sup>64</sup>. From the same period one can turn to C14 dates sampled from the site in Celei<sup>65</sup>, while others have been obtained from Horodiștea/Gordinești<sup>66</sup>, Zhivotilovka<sup>67</sup>, and Usatovo<sup>68</sup> features, including some with bodies in supine positions with extended legs in burial mounds<sup>69</sup>. Such dates also suggest a certain structure of the events<sup>70</sup>. Two dates were performed for samples from the Bodești-*Frumușica* settlement, associated with pottery with analogies in the Cernavoda II-Foltești II cultural environment<sup>71</sup>. For the latter cultural segment there are several unpublished dates from the sites in Târgșoru Nou (Prahova) and Dămăroaia (Ilfov)<sup>72</sup> that fit the chronological period under discussion. Here must be mentioned three absolute dates from the site in Sărata Monteoru-*Cetățuie*<sup>73</sup> and an isolated one in Pietroasa Mică-*Gruiu Dării*<sup>74</sup>, settlements located in the hilly area of Muntenia. Specialists are still to understand what happened between the end of the Cernavoda I Culture, which, based on the absolute dates, seems to disappear by the middle of the

<sup>52</sup> Rassamakin 1994; Rassamakin 2000; Rassamakin 2013.

<sup>53</sup> Heyd 2011, 539.

<sup>54</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 49; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 121–133, table 6, 7; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019b; Frînculeasa 2019.

<sup>55</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 115–116.

<sup>56</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, p. 115–116; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a, 61–62.

<sup>57</sup> Harțușche, Anastasiu 1968; Comșa 1985; Cavruc, Neagu 1995b; Harțușche 2002; Brudiu 2003; Rența 2016, 97; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 42, 114–116; Garvăn *et al.* 2018, 283, pl. XV/1–3.

<sup>58</sup> Lazurcă 1980; Simion 2003; Vasiliu 2004; Schuster *et al.* 2011b.

<sup>59</sup> Ecsedy 1979, 19; Dani, Nepper 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Georgevic, Georgevic 2016.

<sup>61</sup> Panayotov 1989; Kitov *et al.* 1991; Nikolova 1999; Alexandrov 2011; Alexandrov 2015; Alexandrov 2019; Alexandrov, Kaiser 2016; Dimitrova 2014; Dimitrova 2018; Georgieva *et al.* 2018.

<sup>62</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a, 66.

<sup>63</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, table 4; Frînculeasa 2020b.

<sup>64</sup> Simache, Teodorescu 1962, 275, 280; Frînculeasa 2020a.

<sup>65</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, footnote 116.

<sup>66</sup> Lazarovici 2010; Diachenko, Harper 2016; Immel *et al.* 2020.

<sup>67</sup> Manzura 2016; Włodarczak 2017, 264.

<sup>68</sup> Rassamakin 2012.

<sup>69</sup> Horváth *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c, fig. 1/A.

<sup>70</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c; Włodarczak 2017, 266.

<sup>71</sup> Munteanu 2018, 146.

<sup>72</sup> Frînculeasa 2020a.

<sup>73</sup> Lazarovici 2010.

<sup>74</sup> Munteanu 2017, table.



4<sup>th</sup> millennium<sup>75</sup>, and this burial horizon that starts around 3300/3250 BC. One should not exclude Cernavoda III presences, as they are already known along the Danube<sup>76</sup>. As for the Coțofeni Culture, the absolute dates cover the final third of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the first quarter of the subsequent millennium<sup>77</sup>.

### **Case study – *Movila pe Răzoare* in the municipality of Ariceștii-Rahivani**

In November 2016 the Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology has coordinated archaeological excavations in the territory of the municipality of Ariceștii-Rahivani (Prahova County). Archaeologists have excavated a burial mound labelled *Movila pe Răzoare* on existing topographic maps (Pl. 1/3). The mound did not stand out against the landscape (Pl. 2/1) and measured approximately 35 m in diameter and 0.8 m in height. It was located 860 m north of DN 72, 450 m north of the Remat headquarters, on field strip 45A, plot 395/1/A (Pl. 1). The site has the R.A.N. code 132084.16 and the following geographic coordinates: 44°56'22.98"N, 25°53'27.85"E.

#### *A. Excavation method*

The research methodology has already been described<sup>78</sup> and has been employed in the case of several burial mounds investigated in the *Prahova Area*<sup>79</sup>. Two main control baulks were set out, oriented approximately N-S (M.I) and W-E (M.II), measuring 1 meter in thickness and intersecting in the central area. They divided the mound into four areas/quarters labelled A/South, B/West, C/North, and D/East. Eight sections were set inside these areas, oriented in alternate succession, parallel or perpendicular to the two main stratigraphic baulks (Pl. 2/2–3; 3/2). The 24 stratigraphic profiles thus obtained have allowed for a good coordination of the research and at the same time they have provided additional information regarding the horizontal and vertical development of this funerary monument.

#### *B. Stratigraphic data – the development of the funerary monument*

Stratigraphy: I. arable/plough layer, measuring ca. 0.10-0.15 m in thickness, gray in colour; II. a darker lens, varying between 0.20-0.40 m in thickness, was located towards the periphery of the mound (especially northwards); III. the initial mound (the mantle) that covered the primary grave measured 21×22 m in diameter (NS-EW) and approximately 0.6 m in height; it was reddish-brown in colour, made of clay mixed with small pebbles; IV. ancient layer, ca. 0.10 m-thick, brownish in colour, made of clay mixed with pebbles; V. natural gravel deposit (Pl. 3/3–4).

#### *C. Researched archaeological features*

One single grave was discovered (Gr.1) along with two features labelled *Cpl. 1* and *Cpl. 2* (Pl. 3/2). Prehistoric pottery fragments were also unearthed in S.III, north-west of *Cpl. 1*, on top of the ancient ground level (Pl. 12/2).

Grave 1 (Gr.1) – discovered in S.III and S.I, directly below the main stratigraphic baulk I (M.I). The grave pit was rectangular with rounded corners. It measured 1.75×1.10 m (EW-NS) and approximately 1 m in depth. In cross-section, the pit was slightly tronconic in shape, wider in the upper part. Along the southern and western sides the bottom of the pit displayed a continuous groove that measured ca. 8 cm in depth and 20 cm in width. The eastern part of the pit had been affected by subsequent interventions. The pit cut through the ancient ground level and through the natural gravel deposit. The gravel excavated from the pit had been set on the sides, to the west and to the east (Pl. 3/2–2; 4/2–3).

The grave contained the skeletal remains of four individuals (Table 1). The bones of the deceased were in secondary position, grouped in the western half of the pit; a single skull (of individual D) and several isolated bones were located in the eastern part. Most of the bones were not in anatomical connection, as they had been manipulated after the decomposition of the soft tissue (after skeletonization) (Pl. 5; 6). Two femur bones, a pelvis fragment, and a human clavicle were found in the north-eastern area of the pit (the long side), in transitory position from the upper part of the pit towards the bottom, placed almost vertically (Pl. 5/1). These bones belong to one of the four individuals identified

<sup>75</sup> Frînculeasa 2016, table 3; Munteanu 2017, 51, table.

<sup>76</sup> Roman 2001.

<sup>77</sup> Ciugudean 2000, 58; Ciugudean 2015, 168; Diaconescu, Tincu 2016; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, fig. 25, 26; Diaconescu 2020. The two dates from Măgura (Bojadžiev 1995, 186) are too early to be taken into consideration.

<sup>78</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017d.

<sup>79</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 33–36; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2018, 78–80; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019b, 38–39.

inside the grave. The position of these skeletal remains found in transition towards the inside of the pit, in correlation to the others, indicate a process of post-mortem manipulation of the human bones. This might point to a case of reinterment or possibly a case of inhumation after the display and skeletonization of the body, during a period more or less close to the time of death.

<b>Skeleton label</b>	M.1A	M.1B	M.1C	M.1D
<b>Sex</b>	Female	Female	Female	Male
<b>Age (years)</b>	35–39.4	45–50	12–14	48.8–55

Table 1. Synthetic anthropologic diagnostic of Grave 1 (taken from Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017d, 165).

A pot was discovered towards the western edge of the pit, lying on one side, placed on top of the bones (Pl. 5). The pot is a cup with a strap-type heightened handle, spherical body, flared mouth, and slightly convex base. It was modelled out of sandy paste, brownish in colour; it seems to have been covered on the outside in burnished engobe. The pot is decorated with vertical incisions in the contact area between neck and body, while on the body it displays a row of oblique lines performed in the “*Furchenstich*” technique that describes a continuous W-shape (Pl. 7). Dimensions: mouth diameter = 10.9 cm, maximum diameter = 13.5 cm, pot height = 12 cm, maximum height with handle = 13.2 cm, handle width = 2.5 cm, handle thickness = 0.6 cm.

Numerous ornaments were discovered in the pit, among and/or beneath the bones. They consisted of flat beads made of *Unio* shells (106+44 fragments), tubular beads made of *Dentalium* (3), as well as three perforated *Unio* shells (Pl. 8), one of which is fragmentarily preserved (Pl. 8/4). The pit also contained numerous copper items – tubes made of copper sheets (33) (Pl. 10), but also rectangular “plaques”<sup>80</sup> made of the same metal (4) (Pl. 9). There were also two pendants made of swine canine teeth, one of which was decorated (Pl. 11/1–2). Beneath the skull of individual B there was a flint knife (Pl. 6/2; 11/4) and two other flint blade fragments (Pl. 11/5). Green traces of copper have been preserved on several of the human bones. Red ochre and fragments of vegetal textiles and wood were also discovered in the grave pit.

Two other archaeological features were discovered in S.III, east of the grave. The section has also revealed pottery located on the ancient ground level, below the mantle:

**Feature 1 (Cpl. 1)** – was located in S.III, towards the southern profile, ca. 6.60 m east of the main stratigraphic baulk I. It consisted of a small depression in the soil, measuring no more than 0.6 m in diameter and 0.10–0.20 m in depth into the ancient ground level on top of which the burial mound has been erected. The feature contained the remains of several pots (probably seven) (Pl. 12; 13; 14; 15/1–3; 16/1–3).

**Feature 2 (Cpl. 2)** – discovered in S.III, east of Gr.1. It was an oval pit, oriented E-W, measuring 0.80×0.65 m, deepening by 0.20 m in the natural layer. A lens of ochre was located on the bottom of the feature that contained no other inventory. It was probably a pit that perforated the mantle of the burial mound. This feature might have been a secondary grave that contained the body of an *infans*, the skeleton of which has not been preserved.

From the ancient ground level pottery fragments from three pots were recovered (Pl. 12/3; 15/5, 6–7; 16/4–5).

## On cultural goods and backgrounds

(brief excursus into the local and trans-regional context)

Besides the grave goods and pot from grave 1 (appendix 1), pottery fragments from other several pots were recovered from Feature 1 (Cpl. 1), and from the ancient ground level. The fragments belong to different types of pottery shapes such as amphora, cup, bowl, storage jar, with decorations created through incisions and impressions, with motifs that are specific to the era. Cpl.1 contained fragments from three cups with heightened handle, one dish with a wide rim, an amphora-shaped pot, and two decorated shards from a pot the shape of which could not be identified. From fragments found on the

<sup>80</sup> Improperly called plaques, in fact items made by rolling a copper plate, similar to a tube but not circular in section but flattened oval or flattened rectangular.

ground level were partially reconstructed a large bowl and two storage pots, one of which was covered in barbotine on the outside. Besides pottery, the ornaments made of copper, shells, and bones help one elaborate an analysis of the cultural background at the Lower Danube and the place of this burial mound in the era's dynamics.

#### A. Pottery

a. The cup – both the shape and the decoration (technique and motifs) of the pot discovered in the grave suggests it was made in the Coțofeni environment (Pl. 7). The *Furchenstich* decoration technique is characteristic to phase III of the Coțofeni Culture<sup>81</sup> and this supports a better chronological identification of the pot in relation to the development of the funerary phenomenon. It can be encountered in settlements attributed to the Coțofeni III phase in sites from Transylvania and Oltenia such as those in Silvașu, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Ocnița, Gligorești, etc.<sup>82</sup>

b. Cups – in Feature 1 (*Cpl.1*) archaeologists discovered the remains of three cups with similar shape but decorated differently. One of the cups was decorated at the base of the neck with a series of prolonged, slightly oblique impressed concavities (Pl. 15/4; 16/1). A very good analogy for one of these cups is an item discovered in grave 3/mound IV from Păulești (Pl. 17/1), for which the C14-AMS date confirms the same chronological interval<sup>83</sup>. At the same time, a similar pot was discovered in the grave from Suharu in which the individual was placed in supine position with extended legs<sup>84</sup> and the chronology of which is connected to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC<sup>85</sup>. The second cup found in Ariceștii-Rahtivani displays incised decoration consisting of angular rows, hachured on the inside (Pl. 15/2; 16/3), with analogies discovered in Locusteni and Orlea, sites attributed to the early Coțofeni phase<sup>86</sup>. This type of decoration, employed on this cup and on the amphora-shaped pot discovered in the same feature, can also be encountered during the subsequent phases of the Coțofeni Culture on sites such as those in Basarabi, Cozia, Nandru, Onele Mari, Unirea, Sântimbru, Aiud, Poiana Ampoiului, Brăneț, and Gligorești<sup>87</sup>. From the Baden cultural environment can be mentioned a pot with similar decoration found in Slovakia, in Zalužice<sup>88</sup>, and several items from Pișcolț, Uimăt, and Cladova<sup>89</sup>. The third cup, of which only a small fragment has been preserved, also displays incised decoration (Pl. 15/1; 16/2).

c. Dish with a wide rim – a dish with wide upper part and incised decoration was also found; the rim is alveolate and on the body the pot features a row of short, vertical, and parallel incisions (Pl. 14). Such dishes are usually decorated in the upper (inner) side with hachured triangles or oblique parallel lines placed in rows and created through incision, cord decoration, or the *Furchenstich* technique, sometimes with encrusted white paste. Pots with similar decoration were found in settlements attributed to the Coțofeni Culture in Transylvania, such as the one in Gligorești<sup>90</sup>, or south of the Carpathians, such as those in Ostrovul Corbului, Orlea, and Rogova<sup>91</sup>. A decoration similar to the one on the vessel from Ariceștii-Rahtivani features on dishes with wide rim discovered on the site in Cernavoda<sup>92</sup>. Dishes with wide rim of this shape can be encountered on the sites of Cernavoda II<sup>93</sup>, Horodiște<sup>94</sup>, and also Cernavoda III<sup>95</sup>. Those with cord decoration found east of the Carpathians are connected to the Horodiște-Gordinești environment<sup>96</sup>. Such vessels and decorations continued to be in use during the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, including on the site in Celei, in the post-Cernavoda III layer<sup>97</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> Roman 1976a, 46; Ciugudean 2000, 50.

<sup>82</sup> Roman 1976a; Ciugudean 2000; Tuțulescu 2016; Popa, Gogâltan 2020.

<sup>83</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017e.

<sup>84</sup> Berciu 1939, fig. 96

<sup>85</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

<sup>86</sup> Roman 1976a, pl. 61/6; Roman 1976b, fig. 7/18; Ciugudean 2000, 52.

<sup>87</sup> Roman 1976a, pl. 39/9, 14; 82/9; Ciugudean 2000, pl. 50/1, 5; 52/5; 54/2; 56, 72/10; Tuțulescu 2016, fig. 29/1, fig. 55/6; Popa, Gogâltan 2020.

<sup>88</sup> Horváthová 2008, fig. 3/5.

<sup>89</sup> Roman, Nemeti 1978, pl. 31/1–2; 33/11; 61/8; Sava 2015.

<sup>90</sup> Popa, Gogâltan 2020.

<sup>91</sup> Roman 1976a, pl. 99/1, 3–4; Roman 1976b, fig. 1/1; Tuțulescu 2016, fig. 40/16; 41/2; 60/1–4; 67/4.

<sup>92</sup> Morintz, Roman 1968a, fig. 54/4; Berciu *et al.* 1973, pl. 8/11.

<sup>93</sup> Berciu *et al.* 1973, pl. 8; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2020, fig. 1.

<sup>94</sup> Dumitroaia 2000, fig. 28/19–20.

<sup>95</sup> Nica 1982; Bulatović, Kapuran 2016, pl. I/17.

<sup>96</sup> Burtănescu 2002.

<sup>97</sup> Bujor 1967, 214; Nica 1982, fig. 12/1.

Such items also feature in burials south of the Danube, in Goran Slatina, Ovchartsii, and Drazhevo<sup>98</sup>. In the case of the latter feature, the item had been deposited in a collective grave with stone ring, associated with an amphora, hair rings, and a dagger made of arsenical copper<sup>99</sup>. The pot in Gr.9 found in Ovchartsii can be dated with the help of the 4328±29 BP/3017–2895 cal. BC date<sup>100</sup>. The pots found in Bulgaria in tumular graves or in settlements have been connected to EBA II, called the *Mihalic Phase*<sup>101</sup>. Such a pot was discovered in Mologa, in a burial mound from the area of Bugeac<sup>102</sup>.

d. Bowl – one fragment with alveolate rim was discovered (Pl. 16/5); the shape is specific to the chronological horizon under analysis and such items were found in Coțofeni, Cernavoda II, Foltești II, and Horodișteea settlements<sup>103</sup>.

e. Amphora-shaped pot – fragments of an amphora-shaped pot were discovered, with spherical body, made of chestnut-brown sandy paste, with incised decoration consisting of hachured angular rows on the body (Pl. 13/1–5), vertical parallel lines on the neck and handle (Pl. 13/2). Such pots, with similar decoration, were discovered in Coțofeni sites in Silvașu, Săvârșin, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Basarabi, Ocnele Mari, etc.<sup>104</sup>, including sites south of the Danube<sup>105</sup>. One notes the item's analogy with the pot attributed to the Coțofeni Culture in Sântimbru<sup>106</sup> and a pot from Slovakia, in Zalužice, discovered in the Baden cultural environment<sup>107</sup>. Amphora-shaped pots were discovered in burial mounds recently researched in Prahova County, in Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound IV and mound VII<sup>108</sup>, Păulești mound IV<sup>109</sup>, and Ploiești-Triaj mound I<sup>110</sup>. In mound IV/grave 3 from Ariceștii-Rahtivani was found an amphora-shaped pot that displays incised hachured angular rows<sup>111</sup>, with analogies in Mound 1/Cpl.5 from Silvașu de Jos<sup>112</sup> and in the settlement in Săvârșin<sup>113</sup>. According to the absolute dates, the two graves in Ariceștii-Rahtivani and Silvașu de Jos can be included in the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC<sup>114</sup>. Both grave 1/Cpl.5/Silvașu de Jos and the habitation layer in Săvârșin have been attributed to the Coțofeni III phase<sup>115</sup>.

For the extra-Carpathian area one should mention the discoveries made in Horodișteea, Izvoarele, Foltești, Cernavodă, and Cățelu Nou<sup>116</sup>. The pot shape under discussion is also well-known in the Tripolie CII cultural environment<sup>117</sup>. East of the Prut River, amphorae are found in Yamnaya graves in Kazaklia, Taraklia, Sărăteni, and Kamenca<sup>118</sup>. Grave 22 from Valea Lupului is also a Yamnaya grave<sup>119</sup>. South of the Danube, an amphora was found in a burial mound in Drazhevo<sup>120</sup>, from a richly furnished grave that could be an early Yamnaya feature. In the extra-Carpathian area the shape of this pot could originate in the Tripolie CI/Cucuteni B environment<sup>121</sup>, but one should also take into consideration

<sup>98</sup> Kitov *et al.* 1991, fig. 33; Alexandrov 2015, fig. 15; Iliev, Bakardzhiev 2018. As for the burial mound in Drazhevo, the sources employed reveal contradictions. Valchev 2018, 43 (and poster) speaks of two pots, one in Gr.1 and the second in Gr.4, while Iliev, Bakardzhiev 2018, 327, fig. 3, 4, no. cat. 15, speak of a single pot in Gr.5. The images published in the two studies suggest that the pot in Gr.5 is in fact the same as the one in Gr.4.

<sup>99</sup> Iliev, Bakardzhiev 2018, catalogue 15–25.

<sup>100</sup> Alexandrov 2015, fig. 12/1; Kaiser, Winger 2015, tab. 1.

<sup>101</sup> Alexandrov 2018a; Alexandrov 2018b, fig. 4.

<sup>102</sup> Maliuchevici *et al.* 2017, fig. 37/7.

<sup>103</sup> Roman 1976a; Berciu *et al.* 1973; Ciugudean 2000; Dumitroaia 2000; Tuțulescu 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Roman 1976a; Ciugudean 2000; Tuțulescu 2016.

<sup>105</sup> Alexandrov 2007, p. 226, pl. III.

<sup>106</sup> Ciugudean 2000, pl. 54/2.

<sup>107</sup> Horváthová 2008, fig. 3/5.

<sup>108</sup> Preda-Bălănică *et al.* 2019, 325, footnote 8; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019b, appendix 2, no. 13–14. The pot features together with a copper flanged axe, two silver hair rings, flat beads made of shells, a copper piercing tool.

<sup>109</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017d; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017e.

<sup>110</sup> Previously unpublished, pottery fragment from the patrimony of the MJIAP.

<sup>111</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014, pl. 5/4, 6–7.

<sup>112</sup> Luca *et al.* 2011, pl. 5/2.

<sup>113</sup> Sava 2015, pl. 33/4.

<sup>114</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014a; Diaconescu, Tincu 2016, table 1.

<sup>115</sup> Diaconescu, Tincu 2016, 111; Sava 2015, 184.

<sup>116</sup> Dumitrescu 1945, fig. 7, 10/2; Vulpe 1957, fig. 276/2, 279/1; Leahu 1965, fig. 5; Berciu *et al.* 1973, pl. 10; Petrescu-Dîmbovița 1974b, fig. 12/1–3; Dinu 1980, p. 6.

<sup>117</sup> Ivanova, Toshev 2015; Manzura 2019, fig. 6.

<sup>118</sup> Agulnikov, Redina 2005, fig. 6/6; Levițki *et al.* 1996, fig. 4; Ivanova 2013.

<sup>119</sup> Dinu 1959, fig. 3, 4; Dinu 1974, 263–264, fig. 2–3.

<sup>120</sup> Iliev, Bakardzhiev 2018, fig. 3, cat no. 18.

<sup>121</sup> Dumitroaia 2000.



the influence of the Spherical Amphorae Culture<sup>122</sup> that has been attested in the extra-Carpathian area<sup>123</sup> and in Transylvania<sup>124</sup>. Radiocarbon dates nevertheless indicate a chronological gap<sup>125</sup> in the sense that the Spherical Amphorae Culture rather made contact with the Yamnaya/Bugeac environment<sup>126</sup> towards the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC<sup>127</sup>. Part of the same discussion one should also mention the relation between the Late Baden communities and those of the Spherical Amphorae<sup>128</sup>. Besides, I have already noted the presence of amphora-shaped pots in the Baden environment, some under the influence of Coțofeni pottery<sup>129</sup>.

Another site that needs to be mentioned is *Tîrpești-Râpa lui Bodai* where four flat inhumation graves were excavated, but also a settlement that reminds of the Foltești II-Cernavoda II cultural horizon through its pottery<sup>130</sup>. The deceased were placed in supine position with the lower limbs flexed and raised, subsequently collapsed sideways or lozenge-shaped. Grave 1 has revealed an amphora-shaped pot, but also a tubular copper pearl, while grave 2 and grave 4 contained a small amphora-shaped pot each, in the latter feature associated with a bowl with notched rim and a row of alveoli on the body<sup>131</sup>. The settlement of Tîrpești is located west of the Siret River, in an area without tumular burials. Still, it has revealed another example of flat burial like grave 3 from Costișa that marks the presence of the Yamnaya ritual in this area<sup>132</sup>. Though the two features have been discussed together, the chronological connection between the settlement and the graves in Tîrpești remains unknown. The pottery from this settlement can be attributed to habitation dated to the final third of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC<sup>133</sup>. One can add the presence of a copper flanged axe, a stray find on the same site<sup>134</sup> that can also be interpreted as an early element<sup>135</sup>. Thus, the settlement in Tîrpești could be earlier than the graves with Yamnaya ritual. Grave 22 in Valea Lupului<sup>136</sup> and east of the Prut the discovery from Tîrpești (grave 1) are the only ones associating the Yamnaya ritual and an amphora-shaped pot. The presence of the tubular copper item is also significant<sup>137</sup>, as this type of ornament is specific to burials part of the horizon discussed in the present study, though they are also present in Yamnaya burials<sup>138</sup>. On the other hand, a small amphora and a bowl with alveolate rim are associated in a collective grave researched in Drazhevo<sup>139</sup>. This was probably part of an early Yamnaya chronological horizon, a period when the two main rituals coexisted (lateral-crouching and supine with flexed lower limbs).

f. storage pots – fragments from two pots were found, one of which is decorated with a row of alveoli that suggests an alveoli girdle (Pl. 15/6; 16/4); other fragments were part of a coarse pot with barbotine decorated with motifs structured according to a meander-shaped pattern (Pl. 15/7).

g. decorated pottery fragments – in Feature 1 (*Cpl. 1*) one notes the presence of two pottery fragments that belong to the same pot, decorated with short incised lines, placed parallel to each other, cut by a vertical line (*small ladder/fence*) (Pl. 15/3). This type of decoration also features on the pottery attributed to the Coțofeni<sup>140</sup> as well as the Baden cultures<sup>141</sup>.

Feature 1 (*Cpl.1*) has revealed pottery with decorations/shapes that can be encountered ever since the early phases of the Coțofeni Culture, but also in phase III, in chronological correspondence to the pot in grave 1 from Ariceștii-Rahtivani. Most likely there was no relevant chronological lag

<sup>122</sup> Szmyt 2013; Ivanova 2013.

<sup>123</sup> Dinu 1961; Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011.

<sup>124</sup> Szekeley 2009; Gogâltan 2013; Ciugudean 2015.

<sup>125</sup> Bârliba-Mihăilescu, Szmyt 2013; Szmyt 2013.

<sup>126</sup> Heyd 2017, 351.

<sup>127</sup> Ivanova 2013; Włodarczak 2017.

<sup>128</sup> Krauß 2014.

<sup>129</sup> Horváthová 2008, fig. 2.

<sup>130</sup> Marinescu-Bîlcu 1964; Marinescu-Bîlcu 1981. Munteanu 2018.

<sup>131</sup> Marinescu-Bîlcu 1964; Marinescu-Bîlcu 1981, fig. 211/3, 10.

<sup>132</sup> Popescu, Băjenaru 2008, fig. 4/3.

<sup>133</sup> Munteanu 2018, 148–149.

<sup>134</sup> Dumitroaia 1985, 469–470, fig. 3.

<sup>135</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 157.

<sup>136</sup> Dinu 1959, fig. 4.

<sup>137</sup> Marinescu-Bîlcu 1964, 241.

<sup>138</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, pl. 11/4.

<sup>139</sup> Iliev, Bakardzhiev 2018, fig. 3.

<sup>140</sup> Roman 1976a, pl 47/11–12; Ciugudean 2000, fig. 32/6; Băjenariu 2005, pl. IV/3; VIII/2; Popa, Gogâltan 2020.

<sup>141</sup> Roman, Nemeti 1978, pl. 65/2, 5.



between *Cpl.1* and grave 1. Besides, in the mound's mantle there was no pottery that would have been displaced during the construction of the funerary monument in the case it was build over a previous settlement and would have possibly disturbed it on that occasion. Furthermore, to phase Orlea-Sadovec that P. Roman believed to be an early stage in the development of the Coțofeni Culture<sup>142</sup>, one might include a series of absolute dates in the 3100–2900 BC interval, calculated for several graves in Lîga<sup>143</sup>.

#### B. Ornaments

a. Tubular copper items – 37 metal artifacts were found in the grave (appendix 1) (Pl. 9,10). Three other examples (associated with spectacle-shaped pendants) are available in the *Prahova Area* and this high number indicates the existence of at least three necklaces (Fig. 2) that thus combined metal and shell beads (Pl. 6) and were possibly completed by bone objects fulfilling the role of pendants (Fig. 2). Such copper items are frequent finds in the area. Some were discovered in Ploiești mound I/graves 2, 3, and 4, Ploiești mound II/grave 5, Aricești mound IV/grave 4A, Aricești mound V/grave 2, Aricești mound VI/grave 1, Aricești mound VII/graves 1 and 2, Păulești mound II/grave 2, Păulești mound IV/grave 3, Blejoi mound I/grave 1, and Blejoi mound III/grave 3, the majority in male adult graves and sub-adult graves<sup>144</sup>. Some are also known in flat or tumular graves east of the Carpathians, east of the Prut in the area of Bugeac, but also further north, in the Republic of Moldavia. Such items were also found in Dobruja and in their vicinity one can mention the discoveries in the cemetery from Brăilița<sup>145</sup>. This type of items persisted for a long period. Taking into consideration the chronological start and end points, one finds benchmarks in the Aeneolithic flat necropolis in Decea Mureșului and the Late Bronze Age hoard in Băleni<sup>146</sup>. One should also mention the discovery of four tubular, flattened items similar to rectangular plaques in the grave from Ariceștii-Rahtivani (Pl. 9). They have analogies among the items discovered in grave 3/mound IV from Păulești<sup>147</sup>, possibly an artifact from mound I/Ploiești-Triaj, a partially destroyed burial mound<sup>148</sup>. Several items found east of the Prut are more similar to the tubular items<sup>149</sup>. Except for the items in the *Prahova Area*, there are no other such finds in tumular graves at the Lower Danube for the time being.

b. Shell items – the grave in Ariceștii-Rahtivani has revealed numerous ornaments made of *Unio* (Pl. 8/1–4, 6–7) and *Dentalium* (Pl. 8/5) shells. Those made of *Dentalium* shells were also found in contemporary tumular graves, among which one can mention those in Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound VII/graves 1 and 2, Păulești mound IV/grave 3, and Blejoi mound III/grave 3<sup>150</sup>. One also encounters such ornaments in Brăilița in graves 3, 6, and 38, sometimes associated with tubular copper items, all in graves with the bodies placed in lateral-crouching positions<sup>151</sup>. A destroyed tumular grave identified in Șendreni has revealed four pearls made of *Dentalium* associated with four other tubular items made of copper and a pot<sup>152</sup>. Such discoveries also come from Igrîța Cave<sup>153</sup>. *Dentalium* pearls dated to the same chronological interval were discovered south of the Danube in grave 30 from the burial mound in Kamen<sup>154</sup> or in flat graves such as grave 20 in Smyadovo<sup>155</sup>, grave 5 in Dzhulyunitsa<sup>156</sup>, and grave 6 and 7 in Lîga<sup>157</sup>. Such ornaments were also found in level XIII of the *tell* in Ezero<sup>158</sup>, dated to the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC<sup>159</sup>.

<sup>142</sup> Roman 1976b, 163.

<sup>143</sup> Merkyte 2007, 37.

<sup>144</sup> Frînculeasa et al. 2013; Frînculeasa et al. 2015; Frînculeasa et al. 2016; Frînculeasa et al. 2017e; Frînculeasa et al. 2017f.

<sup>145</sup> Burtănescu 2002; Harțuche 2002; Subotin 2008; Frînculeasa et al. 2013; Frînculeasa et al. 2015.

<sup>146</sup> Frînculeasa et al. 2013; Frînculeasa et al. 2015, 71–72.

<sup>147</sup> Frînculeasa et al. 2017e.

<sup>148</sup> Vulpe 1987, fig. 3/10.

<sup>149</sup> Subotin 2008, fig. 3/24.

<sup>150</sup> Frînculeasa et al. 2013; Frînculeasa et al. 2017d; Frînculeasa et al. 2017e; Frînculeasa et al. 2017f.

<sup>151</sup> Harțuche, Dragomir 1957; Dragomir 1959; Harțuche 2002.

<sup>152</sup> Dragomir 1976, 55, fig. 3.

<sup>153</sup> Emódi 1984, 407.

<sup>154</sup> Dimitrova 2018, 317; Modi et al. 2019, tab.1.

<sup>155</sup> Chohadzhiev, Mihaylova 2014, fig. 28b/1.

<sup>156</sup> Mathieson et al. 2018, 6, table 6.

<sup>157</sup> Merkyte et al. 2005, 146–147, fig. X.11, X.15; Merkyte 2007, 36.

<sup>158</sup> Nikolova 2000, 442.

<sup>159</sup> Alexandrov 2018c, 303.

Numerous *Dentalium* pearls were found in Baden graves<sup>160</sup>. At the same time one should mention that the association of *Dentalium* pearls and tubular copper artifacts is often present among the ornaments found in graves that can be attributed to the Baden Culture<sup>161</sup>. One should also remark upon the hoard from Tsviklovtsy located in the Tripolie CII environment that contained 275 *Dentalium* pearls<sup>162</sup>. The presence of such shells/ornaments in the Balkan area is considered as an indication of contacts with the Aegean world<sup>163</sup>. At the same time one should note a Neogene *fossiliferous* deposit exploited since prehistory that is located in Serbia, in Belo Brdo, while others are located around the city of Belgrade<sup>164</sup>, in Hungary or Austria<sup>165</sup>, and in the Transylvanian settlements of Buituri (Cluj) and Râpa (Bihor)<sup>166</sup>. Other fossilized sources are located in Bulgaria or near the Bosphorus<sup>167</sup>, but also on the shores of the Mediterranean, in Israel, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Cyprus<sup>168</sup>.

Numerous flat beads made of *Unio* shells were discovered in pre-Yamnaya tumular graves such as those in Ploiești-Triaș, Blejoi, Ariceștii-Rahtivani, Păulești<sup>169</sup>, but also in the Coțofeni<sup>170</sup> or Baden<sup>171</sup> funerary environments. The grave from Ariceștii-Rahtivani also contained three processed and perforated *Unio* shells, one of which was fragmentarily preserved (Pl. 8/2–4). Perforated shell ornaments are relatively rare in tumular contexts, but they are numerous in the contemporary Baden cultural environment<sup>172</sup>. Unperforated shells were discovered in grave 6/mound 3 from Medgidia, which is nevertheless a Yamnaya grave<sup>173</sup>. One should also mention the presence of ornaments made of *Spondylus* shells discovered in Brăilița<sup>174</sup>, Fălciu<sup>175</sup>, and Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound V/grave 2<sup>176</sup>. This shell has a long history in the Aegean-Balkan relations<sup>177</sup>, but no items made of it were discovered during the present research.



Fig. 2. Suggested reconstruction of a necklace made of the items discovered in the grave from Ariceștii-Rahtivani.

c. Bone items –one should mention the bone pendant made of a swine canine tooth decorated with incisions and perforated (Pl. 11/1–2). The item is unique through its decoration and the canine tooth segment chosen to be processed and used as pendant. A second such item has been fragmentarily preserved (Pl. 11/3) and does not display elements allowing for further analyses. Pendants made of mammal canine teeth are well-known especially in Yamnaya tumular graves, but also in other contemporary cultural contexts.<sup>178</sup> A discovery made in Ploiești-Triaș mound II/grave 19 that can be attributed to a pre-Yamnaya horizon consists of a necklace made of one perforated *sus domesticus* canine tooth and 14 *canis familiaris* canine teeth.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Sümegi 2009; Sachße 2010; Krumpel 2012; Horváth *et al.* 2020, 89.

<sup>161</sup> Horváth *et al.* 2020, 88.

<sup>162</sup> Ivanova, Toshev 2015, 347, fig. 6.

<sup>163</sup> Coleman, Facorellis 2018.

<sup>164</sup> Dimitrijević 2014.

<sup>165</sup> Sümegi 2009, 426; Horváth *et al.* 2020, 86, 89.

<sup>166</sup> Luca *et al.* 2005, 44.

<sup>167</sup> Merkyte *et al.* 2005, 152.

<sup>168</sup> Kurzawska *et al.* 2013.

<sup>169</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015.

<sup>170</sup> Emódi 1984, 406–407, fig. 9; Ciugudean 2000, 43.

<sup>171</sup> Bondár, Raczky 2009; Sümegi 2009; Sachße 2010.

<sup>172</sup> Bondar, Raczky 2009; Horváth *et al.* 2020, 82.

<sup>173</sup> Schuster *et al.* 2011a, fig. 32.

<sup>174</sup> Hartuche 2002.

<sup>175</sup> Popușoi 1989, 16–17.

<sup>176</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2016.

<sup>177</sup> Seferiades 2010.

<sup>178</sup> Frînculeasa 2019, 141–143.

<sup>179</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c, pl. XIX/6–7.

### C. Tools

Three flint items have been recovered from the grave in Ariceștii-Rahtivani (Pl. 11/4–5). Among them one should note a slightly curved blade (*Krummesser?*), with two processed edges (Pl. 11/4). A stone knife interpreted as a *Krummesser* was discovered in grave 13 from the burial mound in Baldovinești-Pepinieră<sup>180</sup>. Flint item fragments feature relatively rarely in the grave pits or the mantles of burial mounds and they are probably part of tools employed in the construction of the funerary features<sup>181</sup>. I should mention two such fragments discovered in grave 2 from Ploiești-Vest<sup>182</sup>.

### Coțofeni absolute chronology and funerary background (brief considerations)

One C14-AMS date has been sampled from the grave in Ariceștii-Rahtivani, on a human bone, calculated at 4408±35 BP/3318–2914 cal BC (95.4% probability) (Fig. 3). Numerous absolute dates have been obtained in the *Prahova Area* and they overlap during the same interval. Specialists have dated features that display elements of ritual and inventory shared by the grave under discussion, but which include, besides pottery, other types of items such as spectacle-shaped pendants, copper flanged axes, a copper torque, and a stone shaft-hole axe<sup>183</sup>. One should mention the dates from burial mound IV in Ariceștii-Rahtivani<sup>184</sup>, especially the date sampled from grave 3 (4455±37 BP/3340–2960 cal BC) that contained an amphora-shaped pot (Pl. 13/6) similar to the one discovered in Feature 1 (*Cpl.1*). The absolute dates from the *Prahova Area* are further supported by the dates analysed from graves and settlements dated to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC<sup>185</sup>. This enables an analysis of the chronological connection between the features dated to the final third of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the Yamnaya phenomenon<sup>186</sup>.

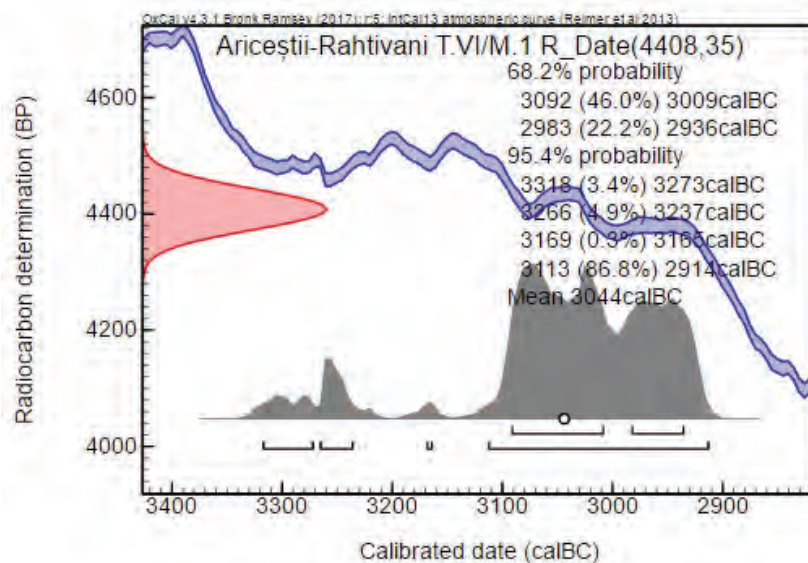


Fig. 3. Graph presenting the C14-AMS date from grave 1 in Ariceștii-Rahtivani.

The absolute dates from features attributed to the Coțofeni culture are not numerous (table 2), some have debatable/not reliable contexts, even unknown, and others cannot be used due to their large error margins<sup>187</sup>. A series of dates originate from the settlements in Ostrovul Corbului and Băile Herculane<sup>188</sup>. The date from Poiana Ampoiului is more recent, included in the graph, but only to be

<sup>180</sup> Harțușe, Anastasiu 1968, 44, 49.

<sup>181</sup> Burtănescu 2002, 253; Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011, 278.

<sup>182</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a, pl. 6/6–7.

<sup>183</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2016; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a.

<sup>184</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014, table 2.

<sup>185</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2018; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019b.

<sup>186</sup> Frînculeasa 2020a.

<sup>187</sup> Băjenaru 1998, 5–8.

<sup>188</sup> Forenbacher 1993.

used as general guideline<sup>189</sup>. The same applies to the four dates from the burial mounds in Silvașu de Jos (*Movilele 1 and 3*)<sup>190</sup>. Two other absolute dates recently published come from the site of Cuina Turcului-Dubova, out of which one indicates  $4143 \pm 28$  BP/2880–2620 cal BC, while the other seems too early<sup>191</sup>. A previously unpublished date sampled from Gligorești-*Holoame* pit 9/1994<sup>192</sup> and calculated at  $4514 \pm 30$  BP/3354–3100 cal BC, besides the date from Poiana Ampoiului and some of the dates from Băile Herculane and Ostrovul Corbului<sup>193</sup> fit the chronological horizon that preceded the emergence of the Yamnaya at the Lower Danube<sup>194</sup>. The discoveries in Silvașu de Jos are interpreted as Coțofeni IIIb<sup>195</sup>, while those from Gligorești, Băile Herculane, and Ostrovul Corbului also fall inside/around phase IIIa-b<sup>196</sup>, some possibly slightly earlier<sup>197</sup>.

The absolute dates from Poiana Ampoiului are worthy of a brief analysis. The differences in error margin sets them on slightly different levels, and those with smaller error margin performed in Berlin are earlier. One date falls in the final third of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC<sup>198</sup>, while the other four are calculated for the first half of the subsequent millennium<sup>199</sup>. Out of these latter four, two could be attributed to a post Coțofeni IIIb horizon that some researchers have labelled phase IIIc<sup>200</sup>, possibly Coțofeni IV<sup>201</sup>. The other dates fall inside the development of Livezile Group<sup>202</sup> or, according to other authors, to the Early Bronze (the Copăceni Culture/Group), without genetic connections to Coțofeni<sup>203</sup>. These two latter dates are similar to the ones from Livezile-*Baia*<sup>204</sup> and Florești-*Polus*<sup>205</sup>. The date sampled from Meteș cannot be taken into consideration in this analysis<sup>206</sup>. It needs to be mentioned that the site in Poiana Ampoiului contains habitations that can be dated to both cultural stages<sup>207</sup>. The Livezile Group and/or the Copăceni Group evolved most likely after 2700 BC<sup>208</sup>, between 2700 and 2300 BC, and the few available absolute dates correlated with the archaeological data seem to support the existence of two stages<sup>209</sup>.

ID LAB	Context	Date in years BP	Calibrated years, sigma 1/68.2%	Calibrated years, sigma 2/95,4%	Mean value
DeA- 5090	Gligorești	$4514 \pm 30$	3346–3114	3354–3100	3219
Lj-3797	Ostrovul Corbului	$4520 \pm 60$	3352–3106	3488–3023	3216
RoAMS-5B	Silvașu de Jos <i>Movila 1</i>	$4510 \pm 33$	3342–3112	3354–3097	3218
RoAMS-5A	Silvașu de Jos <i>Movila 1</i>	$4494 \pm 33$	3334–3102	3351–3037	3214
Poz-78169	Silvașu de Jos <i>Movila 3</i>	$4495 \pm 35$	3335–3102	3352–3037	3213

<sup>189</sup> Ciugudean 2015, 168, fig. 2.

<sup>190</sup> Diaconescu, Tincu 2016, table 1.

<sup>191</sup> Boroneanț 2020, table 10.

<sup>192</sup> Popa, Gogâltan 2020.

<sup>193</sup> Forenbaher 1993.

<sup>194</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a; Diaconescu 2020.

<sup>195</sup> Diaconescu, Tincu 2016, 113.

<sup>196</sup> Roman 1976a.

<sup>197</sup> Bojadžiev 1995, 178; Popa, Gogâltan 2020.

<sup>198</sup> Ciugudean 2015, fig. 2.

<sup>199</sup> Forenbacher 1993.

<sup>200</sup> Roman 1976a, 40; Tuțulescu 2011, 101; Popa, Fazecaș 2013.

<sup>201</sup> Ciugudean 2015, 166, footnote 19, with the related bibliography.

<sup>202</sup> Ciugudean 1996; 2000, 59; Gerling, Ciugudean 2013, 184.

<sup>203</sup> Rotea 1993, 73; Rîșcuța *et al.* 2009, 280; Gogâltan 2013, 16; Rîșcuța 2018. The present study does not aim at discussing the terminological issues specific to this period that have been over discussed/debated in previous bibliography. I shall use the term *Livezile* strictly as working tool, as it most often features in the bibliography.

<sup>204</sup> Ciugudean 1996, 146; Gerling, Ciugudean 2013, 184.

<sup>205</sup> Rotea *et al.* 2014, 31.

<sup>206</sup> Gerling, Ciugudean 2013, 184–185.

<sup>207</sup> Ciugudean 1996, 63.

<sup>208</sup> Gerling, Ciugudean 2013, 184.

<sup>209</sup> Rotea *et al.* 2014, 31.



ID LAB	Context	Date in years BP	Calibrated years, sigma 1/68.2%	Calibrated years, sigma 2/95,4%	Mean value
DeA-2879.1.1	Ariceștii-Rahtivani T.IV/M.3B	4455 ± 37	3326–3027	3340–2943	3167
Lj-3533	Băile Herculane	4460 ± 60	3331–3026	3349–2931	3159
Poz-56674	Silvașu de Jos <i>Movila 1</i>	4430 ± 50	3316–2931	3335–2919	3115
Lj-3534	Băile Herculane	4360 ± 100	3311–2886	3357–2702	3048
DeA-10670	Ariceștii-Rahtivani T.VI/M.1	4408 ± 35	3092–2936	3318–2914	3044
Lj-3798	Ostrovul Corbului	4360 ± 50	3023–2910	3307–2887	3001
Lj-3535	Băile Herculane	4350 ± 60	3081–2901	3322–2878	3006
Lj-3536	Băile Herculane	4300 ± 60	3011–2880	3097–2698	2936
Bln-4620	Poiana Ampoiului	4239 ± 40	2906–2763	2919–2679	2829
Bln-4621	Poiana Ampoiului	4260 ± 41	2918–2780	3011–2696	2866
OxA-30442	Cuina Turcului	4143 ± 28	2866–2635	2875–2623	2743
Bln-4624	Livezile-Baia	4109 ± 44	2855–2581	2872–2503	2703
UZ-2869/ ETH-9277	Poiana Ampoiului	4085 ± 70	2858–2498	2872–2484	2670
UZ-2870/ ETH-9278	Poiana Ampoiului	4030 ± 70	2834–2469	2868–2348	2592
Poz-42712	Livezile-Baia	4015 ± 35	2573–2487	2621–2468	2537
Beta-317258	Florești-Polus M.1/R.1	3930 ± 30	2475–2348	2558–2300	2416
UZ-2868/ ETH-9276	Poiana Ampoiului	3755 ± 70	2286–2040	2454–1966	2178
Poz-42714	Metేశ, T.I/M.3	3660 ± 50	2132–1962	2196–1906	2043

Table 2. Absolute dates from sites with Coțofeni and post Coțofeni materials (Romania).

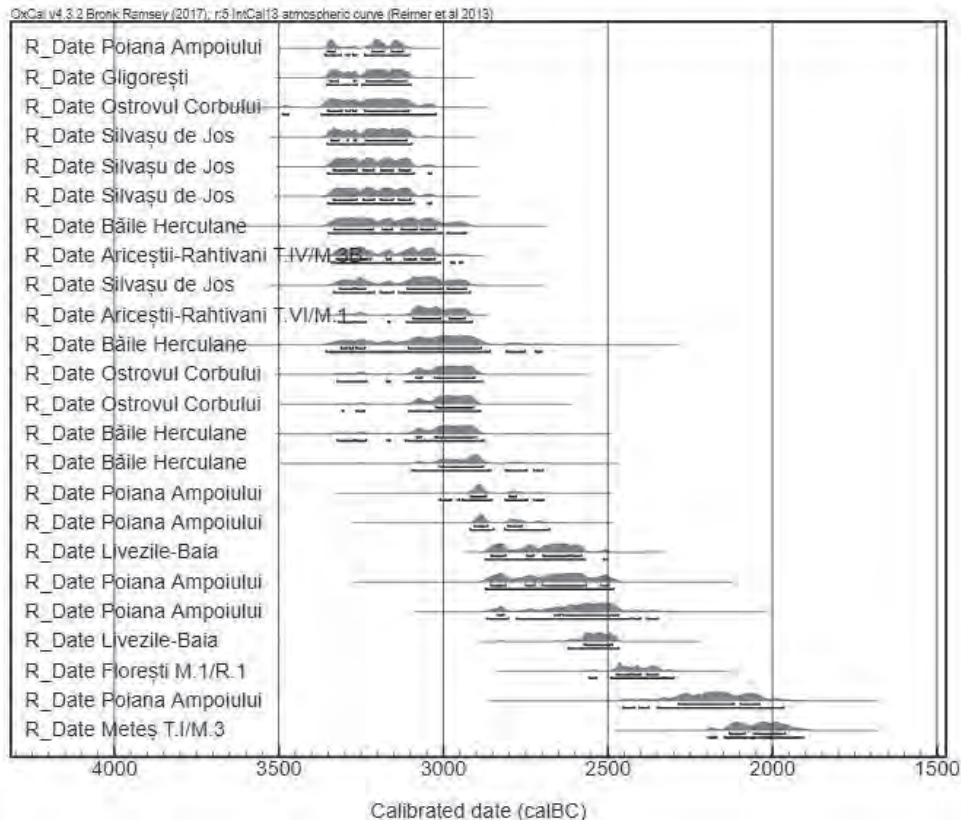


Fig. 4. Graph of C14 dates from Coțofeni and post Coțofeni sites (Romania).

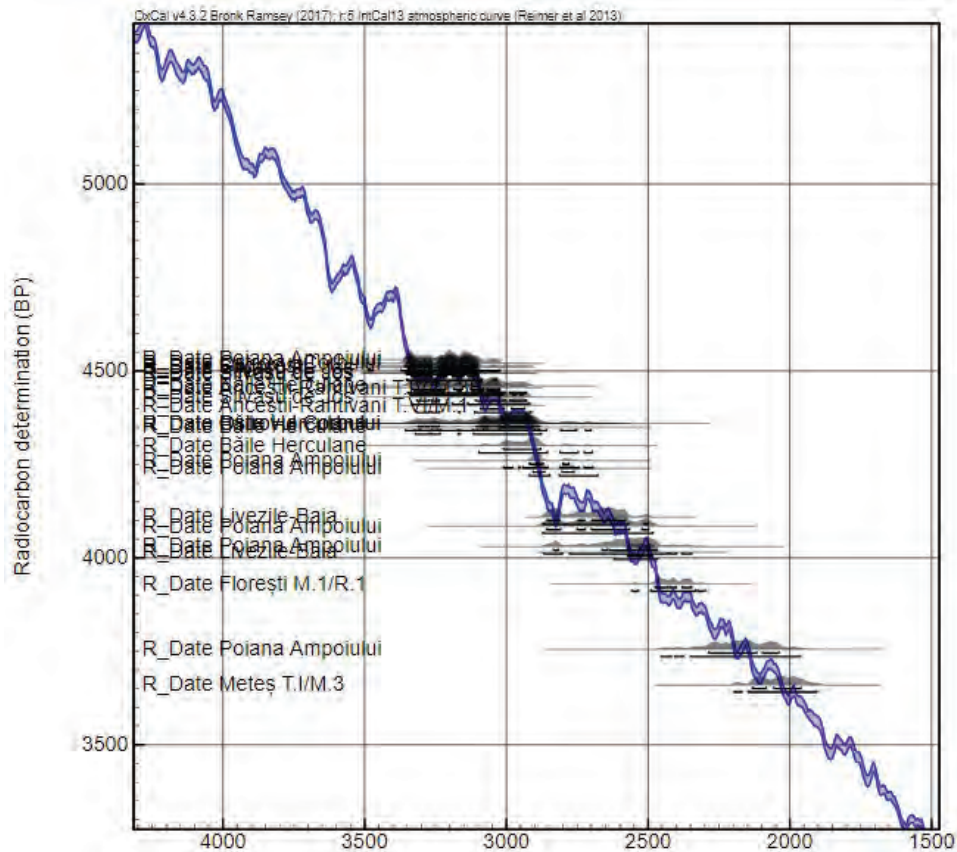


Fig. 5. The calibration curve of C14 dates from Coțofeni and post Coțofeni sites (Romania).

The funerary practices of the Coțofeni communities are still uncertain/debatable<sup>210</sup>, but scholars have not excluded their association with the burial mounds present in the distribution area of this culture<sup>211</sup>, probably during its late stages<sup>212</sup>. In general, the presence of inhumation graves in burial mounds is considered with caution<sup>213</sup>, and at some point the feature in Suharu was believed to be the only such certain find from the Coțofeni environment<sup>214</sup>. Some authors lean towards the preponderance of cremation as burial rite in the Coțofeni Culture<sup>215</sup>. As for the association of the burial mounds with cremation in the Coțofeni environment, the research in Silvașu de Jos and the details they have revealed represent benchmarks in this debate<sup>216</sup>. The discoveries made in Bucova-Pusta IV<sup>217</sup> and Târnovo<sup>218</sup> are also significant. These sites, such as the one in Silvașu de Jos, include a *package*: the burial mound – cremation – Coțofeni pottery – secondary Yamnaya burials<sup>219</sup>.

In the absence of consistent research, the genesis of burial mounds in Transylvania is a topic that still seems to include numerous unknown elements<sup>220</sup>. The presence of burial mounds in Transylvania was associated with the Yamnaya phenomenon that reached the intra-Carpathian area during the late stage in the development of the Coțofeni Culture<sup>221</sup>. Tumular Yamnaya discoveries are mentioned

<sup>210</sup> Gogâltan 2013, 16.

<sup>211</sup> Ciugudean 2000, 43–44.

<sup>212</sup> Popa 2015, 39.

<sup>213</sup> Roman 1976a, 33; Ciugudean 2000, 44.

<sup>214</sup> Roman 1976a, 33.

<sup>215</sup> Popa 2015, 39.

<sup>216</sup> Diaconescu, Tincu 2016, 115; Diaconescu 2020.

<sup>217</sup> Archaeologists have noted (Diaconescu 2020, footnote 108) the analogies between the pot interpreted as Coțofeni discovered in the cremation grave from Bucova-Pusta IV (Krauß *et al.* 2016, 301, abb.8/3) and the item discovered in Ovchartsi-Movila Mare, grave 10 (Alexandrov 2015, fig. 17), with the C14-AMS date of 4391±29 BP/3029–2919 cal BC (95.4% probability) (Kaiser, Winger 2015, table 1).

<sup>218</sup> Panayotov 1989.

<sup>219</sup> Diaconescu, Tincu 2016; Krauß *et al.* 2016, 301; Alexandrov 2019, 82–87.

<sup>220</sup> Ciugudean 1996, 130; Gogâltan 2013.

<sup>221</sup> Ciugudean 2011, 19.

in Câmpia Turzii, Cipău, Râscruci, Hăpria, Silvașu de Jos, Florești-Polus, and Agraș<sup>222</sup>. In the most recent approach of the topic, I. Ciugudean has correlated the arrival of the Yamnaya communities in Transylvania with those north of the Danube. At the same time, paradoxically, the same author connects the copper spectacle pendants present in the "Prahova Area with the Early Yamnaya horizon from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, a phenomenon that presumably reflects the consequences of the interaction with the Late Coțofeni environment in the Transylvanian area"<sup>223</sup>. It should be noted that the three items discovered in the burial mounds from the Prahova Area were found in pre-Yamnaya graves, with specific ritual (deceased placed in lateral-crouching positions, the presence of a stone ring), with radiocarbon dates approximately between 3250 and 2950 BC<sup>224</sup>.

The stratigraphic situation in which the Yamnaya burial mounds overlap Coțofeni sites<sup>225</sup> have contributed to the setting of the chronological connection between the two entities<sup>226</sup>. The few Yamnaya graves known from Transylvania<sup>227</sup>, completed by the presence of several funerary stelae<sup>228</sup>, might occupy this chronological niche that precedes the onset of the Livezile Group and at the same time could be contemporary to the development of the Late Coțofeni communities, also marked by a few absolute dates such as those from Poiana Ampoiului. Stage Coțofeni IIIc has been put forward for the same period/topic during which certain aspects are important, such as Kostolac-type and Vucedol-type elements<sup>229</sup> and cord decorated pottery<sup>230</sup>. Kostolac is dated to the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the beginning of the subsequent millennium<sup>231</sup> and the Coțofeni-Kostolac horizon developed over a longer period of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, in the higher areas<sup>232</sup>.

A specific cultural episode seems to take shape in south-eastern Transylvania (for the period between approximately 2800 and 2600 BC), defined by the Turia-Sânzieni-Mlăjet-type discoveries that were set in direct chronological connection to the Zimnicea group<sup>233</sup>, intersected in Muntenia by the discovery of specific pots (askoi/cups with oblique mouth) in Yamnaya burial mounds such as those in Smeeni, Mircea Vodă, Sultana, Brăilița, etc.<sup>234</sup> Around 2700 BC one notes the onset of burials in mounds with stone mantle connected to the Livezile Group that developed during the second third of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC<sup>235</sup>. The Livezile burial mounds overlap Coțofeni settlements<sup>236</sup> and the chronological connection between them and the Yamnaya is clarified by the absolute dates and a series of artifacts among which the most important are the Leukas-type gold hair rings<sup>237</sup> and pottery<sup>238</sup>. A special case has been encountered in Tureni, where a secondary Yamnaya burial was apparently performed in a Livezile burial mound<sup>239</sup> and this might bring us closer to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC.

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The discoveries made in Silvașu de Jos are solid evidence that burial mounds were present in Transylvania already during the pre-Yamnaya burial horizon<sup>240</sup>, in chronological synchronicity with

<sup>222</sup> Ciugudean 2011, 27–29; Gogâltan 2013, 8–9; Diaconescu 2020, 18.

<sup>223</sup> Ciugudean 2019, 251.

<sup>224</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b.

<sup>225</sup> See also the burial mound in Jabuka (Serbia) raised on top of a site that has revealed Baden and Kostolac materials (Tasić 1995, 73–74). Grave 1 in Jabuka cut through the Kostolac habitation layer and has produced the C14-AMS date calculated at 4100±40 BP/2851–2578 cal BC (68.2% probability) (Koledin *et al.* 2020, table 3).

<sup>226</sup> Gogâltan 2013, 14; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014, 203; 2015, 76; Koledin *et al.* 2020, 42.

<sup>227</sup> Ciugudean 2011, 27–29.

<sup>228</sup> Rîșcuța 2001; Rotea *et al.* 2014.

<sup>229</sup> Ciugudean 2000, 54–55; Rîșcuța *et al.* 2012, 72.

<sup>230</sup> Tuțulescu 2011, 102.

<sup>231</sup> Koledin *et al.* 2020, 22; Bulatović *et al.* 2020, 6.

<sup>232</sup> Bulatović, Kapuran 2016, 196; Kapuran *et al.* 2018, 86.

<sup>233</sup> Roman 1986, 30–31, 35–38.

<sup>234</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 97–103.

<sup>235</sup> Ciugudean 2000, 59.

<sup>236</sup> Rîșcuța 2018, 93–96.

<sup>237</sup> Ciugudean 1996, 33, 127–128, fig. 31/8–9; Preda 2015, 20; Vasilieva 2017.

<sup>238</sup> Dani, Nepper 2006, 44; Gogâltan 2013, 13.

<sup>239</sup> Rotea 1993, 74–75, fig. 1.

<sup>240</sup> Diaconescu, Tincu 2016; Diaconescu 2020.

the Lower Danube<sup>241</sup>. This phenomenon is also stressed by the pottery attributed to the Coțofeni style present in earth mounds located south of the Carpathians (Suharu, Cîrna, Coslogeni, Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound IV, Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound VI, Păulești mound IV)<sup>242</sup>, south of the Danube (Târnovo, Ovchartsî)<sup>243</sup>, or east of the Prut River (Taraklia)<sup>244</sup>. As for the ritual employed, one notes burials with the deceased placed in supine position with extended legs (Suharu) (Pl. 18/3)<sup>245</sup>, in lateral crouching positions, in collective graves (Păulești mound IV)<sup>246</sup>, and post-mortem body manipulation (Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound IV, mound VI)<sup>247</sup>. If in Cîrna the pots were found in a destroyed tumular grave<sup>248</sup>, in Coslogeni<sup>249</sup> and Ariceștii-Rahtivani mound VI/*Cpl.1*<sup>250</sup> the Coțofeni pottery was discovered in features that precede the erection of the mounds and the primary burials were pre-Yamnaya. In Târnovo one encounters Coțofeni pots (Pl. 18/2) associated with cremation graves (Gr.2, Gr.5), but also with inhumation graves with the deceased placed in lateral-crouching positions (Gr.1, Gr.4) or were discovered near the pit/outside the graves<sup>251</sup> of individuals deposited in supine positions with flexed and raised legs (Gr.3, Gr.7, Gr.10)<sup>252</sup>. The pot from Gr.9 does not originate from the burial mound in Târnovo<sup>253</sup>. In Taraklia the Coțofeni pot features in association with a tubular copper pearl and perforated mammal teeth, in a grave with the body placed in crouched position on one side (Pl. 18/1)<sup>254</sup>. In Ovchartsî the bowl was found in a grave with the individual placed in a transitional position, between crouched and supine, with the upper limbs crossed/brought together on the pelvis<sup>255</sup>, a position that reminds of those of the bodies in Ploiești mound II/ grave 7 and Păulești mound II/grave 3<sup>256</sup>.

Another useful element in the analysis of this chronological synchronicity<sup>257</sup> is the onset of spectacle pendants in the tumular graves from Ploiești-*Triaj*, Ariceștii-Rahtivani, and Blejoi<sup>258</sup> or their presence as decoration made in *Furchenstich* technique on Coțofeni III pottery in Răchita, Sebeș, Călnic, Ampoița, Livezile, Șeușa, and Deva<sup>259</sup>. Returning to the situation recorded in the case of *Movila 3* in Silvașu de Jos<sup>260</sup>, it is relevant for the cultural and chronological relation between Coțofeni and Yamnaya<sup>261</sup>. The elements of rite and ritual, but also the relative chronology separate the two entities. Then, one can identify the expansion of the Yamnaya ideology beyond its usual natural context, replacing the old local cultural traditions. To this end, another example is the burial mound in Aгриș located at an altitude of more than 800 m<sup>262</sup> that contained a double Yamnaya grave in the natural and cultural Coțofeni environments<sup>263</sup>. Along the same line of thought, I should also mention the situation of the burial mound in Tureni, even if this marks a relation between the Livezile Group and the Yamnaya<sup>264</sup>. Oltenia could be another area that favoured direct or indirect interactions of the Coțofeni and Yamnaya environments as it hosted two areas: the northern one with Late Coțofeni settlements

<sup>241</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b.

<sup>242</sup> Berciu 1939; Bichir 1958; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017d; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017e.

<sup>243</sup> Panayotov 1989; Jovanović 1992; Alexandrov 2015; 2019.

<sup>244</sup> Agulnikov 1995.

<sup>245</sup> Berciu 1939.

<sup>246</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017e.

<sup>247</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014.

<sup>248</sup> Bichir 1958, 101–103.

<sup>249</sup> Cavruc, Neagu 1995a, 72; Semmoto 2016, fig 5/8–9.

<sup>250</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017d.

<sup>251</sup> Alexandrov 2019, 82. They might have been deposited on the ancient/burial layer, possibly in small alveoli in the soil, a level cut by Gr.2, Gr.7, and Gr.10 that are Yamnaya graves (see also the situations in Coslogeni or *Cpl.1* in Ariceștii-Rahtivani). In this case, the Coțofeni pots were presumably uncovered in the cremation and inhumation graves with individuals placed in lateral-crouching positions, not in those with Yamnaya ritual.

<sup>252</sup> Alexandrov 2019.

<sup>253</sup> Alexandrov 2002, 141–142.

<sup>254</sup> Agulnikov 1995, pl. I/4–10.

<sup>255</sup> Alexandrov 2015, fig. 4/2.

<sup>256</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b, 118–119, fig. 22.

<sup>257</sup> Diaconescu 2020, 28.

<sup>258</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 73; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2016; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017f.

<sup>259</sup> Popa 2010; Popa 2011, 39; Barbu *et al.* 2016, 363.

<sup>260</sup> Diaconescu 2020, fig. 3.

<sup>261</sup> Diaconescu 2020.

<sup>262</sup> The mounds in Silvașu de Jos are located above 500 m in altitude (Luca *et al.* 2011, 7–8).

<sup>263</sup> Diaconescu 2012.

<sup>264</sup> Rotea 1993.



that feature cord decorated pottery<sup>265</sup> and burial mounds<sup>266</sup> and the southern area consisting of a plain rich in tumular burials that remain under-researched<sup>267</sup>.

## Conclusions

Coțofeni communities came into contact with the tumular phenomenon during the pre-Yamnaya chronological horizon, both in Transylvania and in the extra-Carpathian and south-Danubian areas. The cremation rite is also worth taking into consideration, part of the Coțofeni funerary set. This cremation-inhumation dichotomy could be a benchmark in the identification and deciphering of the Coțofeni funerary context in relation with other contemporary communities. As for the presence of the Coțofeni communities in Muntenia, except for the area in the vicinity of the Olt River, it consists of isolated discoveries in this region. The map published by P. Roman features a spot in Prahova County in Mârlogea (the easternmost site), but no corresponding archaeological materials have been published<sup>268</sup>. A pottery fragment was discovered in the meanwhile in Mănești<sup>269</sup>, possibly an *import* in the Cernavoda II cultural environment. No such elements are known in Dâmbovița, while more or less conclusive discoveries have been signaled in Argeș<sup>270</sup>. Coțofeni pottery was discovered in the *Prahova Area* in tumular graves along with types of artifacts that were also encountered in Transylvania. The *Prahova Area* is a micro-region well-structured from a geographic and morphologic perspective, presumably rather marked by Cernavoda II cultural traditions. One thus wonders if the situation points to an expansion of the Coțofeni communities or to certain events with local, possibly regional impact. Several scenarios are worth considering:

The simplest option is the existence of imports/elements of Coțofeni tradition in the local Cernavoda II cultural environment. All these elements that mark the interaction of the two cultural environments in this area feature in chronological contexts dated to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and possibly the beginning of the subsequent millennium. They disappeared almost entirely with the arrival of the Yamnaya communities in the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC<sup>271</sup>.

The Coțofeni and Cernavoda II supra-regional interests might have overlapped south of the Carpathian Bend, intersecting and integrated there in relation to the west-Pontic world represented by Zhivotilovka-type funerary monuments that display a number of shared elements with the pre-Yamnaya tumular discoveries north of the Danube<sup>272</sup>. The local Cernavoda II communities seem to have been in direct contact with the Coțofeni communities, as the rivers Teleajen and Prahova could have acted as communication routes between the two provinces<sup>273</sup>. There are indications of cohabitation, but also of violence<sup>274</sup>. Cernavodă II elements, isolated for now, are known in Transylvania from Deva-Dealul Cetății<sup>275</sup> and Dăbîca<sup>276</sup>. Jar-pots with relatively common traits are present in Cernavoda II settlements, in burial mounds<sup>277</sup>, but also on Coțofeni sites, south of the Danube as well<sup>278</sup>. To the same topic one can add dishes with a wide rim decorated with geometric/linear motifs through incision and successive stitches<sup>279</sup>. Decorations with hachures in angular stripes present on a few pottery fragments from the site in Cernavodă have analogies in the Coțofeni cultural environment<sup>280</sup>, including pots from *Cpl.1* from Ariceștii-Rahtivani.

Salt is the main resource in North Muntenia (Prahova and Buzău sub-Carpathians), while

<sup>265</sup> Roman 1976a; Tuțulescu 2011; Tuțulescu 2016.

<sup>266</sup> Popescu, Vulpe 1966.

<sup>267</sup> Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011, 261.

<sup>268</sup> Roman 1976a, pl. 1.

<sup>269</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2018, pl. 9/5.

<sup>270</sup> Roman 1976a, pl. 1; Tudor 1982; Măndescu *et al.* 2014. A copper flanged axe was also found in the municipality of Retevoiești, see Popescu, Rosetti 1959, fig. 1/6; Băjenaru 2018, fig. 1.

<sup>271</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017b.

<sup>272</sup> Manzura 2016.

<sup>273</sup> Preda-Bălănică *et al.* 2018, 178.

<sup>274</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014, 196, table 1; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017f.

<sup>275</sup> Rîșcuța 2000, 208–209.

<sup>276</sup> Roman 1976a, 57.

<sup>277</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c, pl. XV/6–9.

<sup>278</sup> Morintz, Roman 1968a, fig. 54/4; Roman 1976a, pl. 90/13; Alexandrov 1990, pl. 34, 77. Ciugudean 2000, pl. 51/1.

<sup>279</sup> Morintz, Roman 1968a; Berciu *et al.* 1973; Roman 1976a; Tuțulescu 2016.

<sup>280</sup> Morintz, Roman 1968a, figs. 52/9, 53/12.

Transylvania is known for its copper, silver, and gold resources exploited during prehistory<sup>281</sup>. Such natural resources are missing from the southern area of Romania<sup>282</sup>, while salt deposits are missing from South-East and East Transylvania<sup>283</sup>. At the same time, types of items that could originate in the intra-Carpathian region are present in the *Prahova Area*. Spectacle-shaped pendants and flanged copper axes could originate in the intra-Carpathian area or the Central-European area that crosses the intra-Carpathian region – see the presence of the torque from grave 5/mound IV in Ariceștii-Rahtivani<sup>284</sup>. Completing this discovery, one must not exclude from the equation the Baden funerary environment, with numerous shared elements of inventory and ritual, similar to what we have observed in the case of the tumular graves contemporary in the studied area.

It has been stated that copper items “often feature” among the finds in Coțofeni III settlements<sup>285</sup>. In the absence of a consistent lot of graves attributed to the Coțofeni Culture prestige goods coming from reliable and clear contexts are missing. For example, though items such as flanged copper axes and daggers do feature in the Coțofeni cultural environment, their contexts of discovery are not beyond doubt<sup>286</sup>. In the contemporary Transylvanian environment, one also notes the presence of Baniabic and Dumbrăvioara-type shaft-hole axes<sup>287</sup>, while spectacle-shaped pendants are depicted on Coțofeni III pots<sup>288</sup>. Only lacunar data are available regarding the metal items from the Cernavoda II environment. A flanged axe was found in Tohani (Prahova) on a site possibly Cernavoda II<sup>289</sup>. One also notes the flat grave in Pietrele, with the deceased placed in lateral crouching position, which contained a copper dagger<sup>290</sup>. A Veselinovo-type axe mould was found in the settlement from Cernavodă, devoid of context, attributed to the Cernavoda II habitation<sup>291</sup>. Shaft-hole axes are rare in the early west-Pontic tumular area. They are considered part of a set of technological innovations that started beginning with the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in North Caucasus, where they are well represented in tumular graves with rich inventories, attributed to the Maykop environment<sup>292</sup> or, according to other authors, are specific to the early Yamnaya funerary features from the Middle Dnieper Basin<sup>293</sup>. It is thought that they spread to South-East Europe from the North Pontic steppe, an area where one can still identify them in graves and that this process has been connected to the westward movement of Yamnaya populations and the onset of funerary mounds<sup>294</sup>. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, these axes went through a particular typological development in Central and South-East Europe<sup>295</sup>. In this region, the items do not occur in funerary contexts like in the area of origin, but in most of the cases they are singular depositions and more rarely part of large hoards<sup>296</sup>.

Connecting these discoveries dated to the final third of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC to the *Circumpontic Metallurgical Province (CPM)*<sup>297</sup>, one steps into a chronological horizon closer to the end of Maykop development. The Usatovo and Zhivotilovka groups<sup>298</sup> could be interpreted both as geographic and chronologic extensions that adopted and then mediated towards the Lower Danube transfers of ideas, innovations, and technologies, but also of elements that were to model the structure of local society. Here they found resources, a favourable natural environment<sup>299</sup> and a society that was already accustomed to the west-Pontic world due to the contacts that existed for over a millennium<sup>300</sup>. Besides, the

<sup>281</sup> Pernicka, Anthony 2010, fig. 1; O'Brien 2014; Radivojević *et al.* 2018; Băjenaru 2018.

<sup>282</sup> Lazăr *et al.* 2018.

<sup>283</sup> Cavruk 2010, 8, 12.

<sup>284</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 72; Preda 2015, 13–14.

<sup>285</sup> Ciugudean 2000, 33; 2002.

<sup>286</sup> Ciută, Ciută 2015, 67; Wittenberger, Rotea 2015, 21; Băjenaru 2018, 129.

<sup>287</sup> Dani 2013; Hansen 2014, 255; Rotea *et al.* 2014, 29, footnote 76.

<sup>288</sup> Popa 2011, 39; Barbu *et al.* 2016, 367–368.

<sup>289</sup> Preda-Bălănică *et al.* 2019, 323–325, pl. 2/1.

<sup>290</sup> Hansen 2014, 250, figures 10–11.

<sup>291</sup> Băjenaru 2018, 128.

<sup>292</sup> Hansen 2011, 143; Dani 2013, 204; Szeverényi 2013, 664; Băjenaru, Frînculeasa 2014, 14.

<sup>293</sup> Klochko 2017; Klochko 2019.

<sup>294</sup> Băjenaru 2010, 155; Băjenaru 2018, 127; Dani 2013, 218; Băjenaru, Frînculeasa 2014, 14–15.

<sup>295</sup> Băjenaru 2010, 152.

<sup>296</sup> Băjenaru 2010, 154; Hansen 2011, 143, 146; 2014, 255; Szeverényi 2013, 664, 667; Băjenaru, Frînculeasa 2014, 14.

<sup>297</sup> Chernykh 2008.

<sup>298</sup> Manzura 2016, 64.

<sup>299</sup> Racimo *et al.* 2020.

<sup>300</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2017c.

scarcity of settlements and the inconsistency of archaeological deposits seem to indicate that these communities were very mobile. One can see that the adoption of the habit of mound burials and the dynamic of the goods placed in graves reflects the desire of an elite to display its status and wealth. This elite was ruling over rather local and fragmented entities based on the cohesion of family groups<sup>301</sup>. With the arrival of the Yamnaya, this local elite seems to disappear and be replaced by a transregional elite, very compact from a social perspective, with an ideology of representation and the transmission of power that ensured cohesion beyond the nucleus of origin (in time and space). Another idea was put forward, that the Carpathian Basin functioned as a secondary production center where local primary material was exploited, but at the same time played a significant role in the dissemination of knowledge regarding metallurgy, as part of the western border of the CMP<sup>302</sup>. The idea that this was a period of metallurgic crisis and decline, a phenomenon restored by the arrival of the Yamnaya<sup>303</sup>, is contradicted by the numerous items found in funerary contexts, deposits, or as stray finds<sup>304</sup>.

The funerary monument in Ariceștii-Rahtivani represents an episode from an era when splendour contrasted with the austerity of the Yamnaya funerary features<sup>305</sup>. Prestige goods such as stone shaft-hole axes, copper flanged axes, daggers, as well as ornaments made of metal, bone, and shell mark the era and in individual instances also the funerary features from the *Prahova Area*, but one can extrapolate the same picture to a series of Usatovo graves (Alexandrovka, Purcari) or south-Danubian graves (Kamen, Smyadovo, Drazhevo)<sup>306</sup>. Behind these events one must envisage knowledge and technological accumulations, as well as adjustments to the social framework.

The presence of certain pots, as well as of artifacts part of the Coțofeni tradition in tumular graves located outside the known cultural background, indicate the existence of supra-regional interactions and the inclusion of the Carpathian Basin in the tide of (direct or indirect) relations/contacts with the west-Pontic world, where the northern part of the Lower Danube held (at least) an intermediate position. The events under discussion took place at a time when these regional/local entities were at the peak of their development. In the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, the direct impact of the Yamnaya phenomenon seems to have initially contributed to the de-structuring of these societies and subsequently even to their dissolution.

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**Alin Frînculeasa**

Prahova County Museum of History and Archaeology  
Ploiești, ROU  
alinfranculeasa@yahoo.com

<sup>301</sup> Manzura 2019, 35, 38.

<sup>302</sup> Dani 2013, 210.

<sup>303</sup> Harrison, Heyd 2007, 196.

<sup>304</sup> Hansen 2011, 146; Hansen 2013; Hansen 2014.

<sup>305</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015; Preda-Bălănică *et al.* 2020.

<sup>306</sup> Frînculeasa *et al.* 2019a, 69.

### Appendix. Synthetic table of data regarding the items discovered in grave 1 from Ariceștii-Rahtivani, mound VI

No.	Type	Material	Dimensions	Observations
1	Small plaque	copper	L=59 mm, w=2 mm, h=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=14.91 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
2	Small plaque	copper	L=30 mm, w=16 mm, h=5 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=11.91 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
3	Small plaque	copper	L=45 mm, w=22 mm, h=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=11.13 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1D
4	Small plaque	copper	L=37 mm, w=18 mm, h=9 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=7.17 grams	discovered in the area of the pot
5	Tube	copper	L=32 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=1.33 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1D
6	Tube	copper	L=48 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=1.,45 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1D
7	Tube	copper	L=52 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=3.06 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
8	Tube	copper	L=35 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=2.10 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
9	Tube	copper	L=37 mm, diam.=5–8 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=2.10 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
10	Tube	copper	L=19 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=0.6 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
11	Tube	copper	L=15 mm, diam.=4 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=0.15 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
12	Tube	copper	L=29 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=0.98 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
13	Tube	copper	L=37 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=0.93 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
14	Tube	copper	L=29 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=0.92 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
15	Tube	copper	L=37 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=2.67 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
16	Tube	copper	L=20 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness =1 mm, weight=0.49 grams	discovered near the skull of M.1A
17	Tube	copper	L=27 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.58 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
18	Tube	copper	L=16 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.40 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
19	Tube	copper	L=19 mm, diam.=3–6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.40 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
20	Tube	copper	L=34 mm, diam.=5–8 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.31 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
21	Tube	copper	L=56 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=2.51 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
22	Tube	copper	L=51 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=2.62 grams	discovered near the pot
23	Tube	copper	L=41 mm, diam.=7 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=2.08 grams	-
24	Tube	copper	L=22 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.99 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
25	Tube	copper	L=30 mm, diam.=5 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.73 grams	discovered near the pot
26	Tube	copper	L=46 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.84 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A



No.	Type	Material	Dimensions	Observations
27	Tube	copper	L=44 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.75 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
28	Tube	copper	L=41 mm, diam.=6-7 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.77 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
29	Tube	copper	L=33 mm, diam.=5-6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.99 grams	discovered north of the pot
30	Tube	copper	L=23 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.06 grams	discovered north of the pot
31	Tube	copper	L=18 mm, diam.=4-5 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.41 grams	discovered north of the pot
32	Tube	copper	Initial L.=45 mm, diam.=7 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=2.49 grams	discovered near the pot
33	Tube	copper	L=30 mm, diam.=5-8 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=1.42 grams	discovered near the pot, together with another small fragment
34	Tube	copper	L=25 mm, diam.=7 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.96 grams	discovered near the pot
35	Tube	copper	L=16 mm, diam.=6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=0.54 grams	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
36	Tube	copper	Initial L. =44 mm, diam.=7 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight=2.08 grams	discovered near the pot
37	Tube	copper	Initial L. = 14 mm, diam.= 6 mm, plate thickness=1 mm, weight= 0.40 grams	discovered by the anthropologist among the bones
38	Tubular pearl	<i>Dentalium</i> shell	L=9 mm, diam.=6 mm	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
39	Tubular pearl	<i>Dentalium</i> shell	L=12 mm, max. diam. =7 mm	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
40	Tubular pearl	<i>Dentalium</i> shell	L=18 mm, min. diam. =4.5 mm; max. diam. =6 mm	discovered near the skull of Gr.1A, near a very small fragment
41-81	Flat beads	<i>Unio</i> shell	diameter=5-7.3 mm; thickness=1-2.5 mm	discovered especially near the skull of Gr.1A and the pot
82-123	Flat beads	<i>Unio</i> shell	diameter=4.5-8.5 mm; thickness=1-2.5 mm	discovered especially near the skull of Gr.1A and the pot
124	Flat beads	<i>Unio</i> shell	Fragments	26 fragments, approximately half shells, together with other, very small fragments
125	Flat beads	<i>Unio</i> shell	Fragments	18 fragments, approximately half shells, together with other, very small fragments
126	Pendant	<i>Unio</i> shell	L=21 mm, max. w=19 mm; perforation diam.=4 mm	triangular in shape; discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
127	Pendant	<i>Unio</i> shell	L=23 mm, max. w=20 mm; perforation diam.=3 mm	the perforation is circular in shape, located close to the item's central area; discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
128	Pendant	<i>Unio</i> shell	L=22 mm, max. w=10 mm	three fragments have been preserved, one revealing the trace of the perforation; discovered near the skull of Gr.1A
129	Pendant	mammal bone	max. L=40 mm, sup. w=23 mm, inf. w=11 mm, thickness=3 mm. The slightly oval perforation measures 3-4 mm in diameter.	lower canine sus scrofa, male; decorated on the body with parallel rows of incisions in the central part, along the item's entire length; it is smaller on the margins
130	Pendant	mammal bone	L=52 mm; w=18 mm	lower canine, swine; discovered by the anthropologist among the bones
131	Blade	flint	L=14 mm, w=13 mm, thickness=2.5 mm	triangular in section, gray in colour; discovered near the skull of Gr.1C
132	Blade	flint	L=16 mm, w=9 mm, thickness=3 mm	triangular in section, gray in colour; discovered near the skull of Gr.1C
133	Blade	flint	L=74 mm; w=21 mm	triangular in section in the distal area, trapezoidal in the proximal area, coffee-brown in colour, displays traces of processing/retouching; discovered below the skull of Gr.1C

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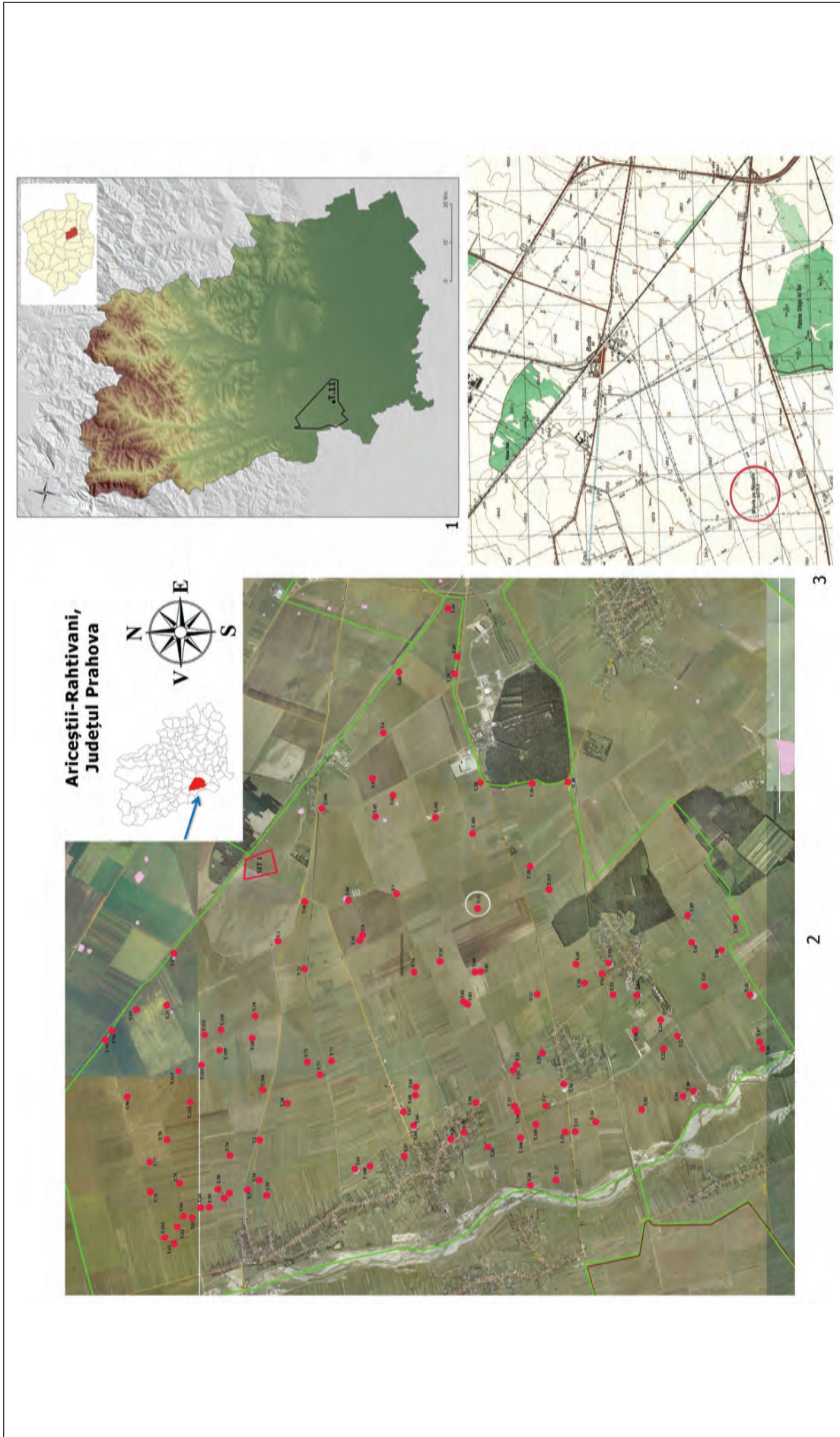


Plate 1. Burial mounds mapped on the territory of the Ariceștii-Rahtivani commune (1-2) and the location of the site researched in *Movila de pe răzoare* (2-3).





Plate 2. Ariceștii-Rahtivani – *Movila de pe răzoare* (1), aerial image (photography by Octav Negrea) (2) and photograph taken during research, view from the east (3).

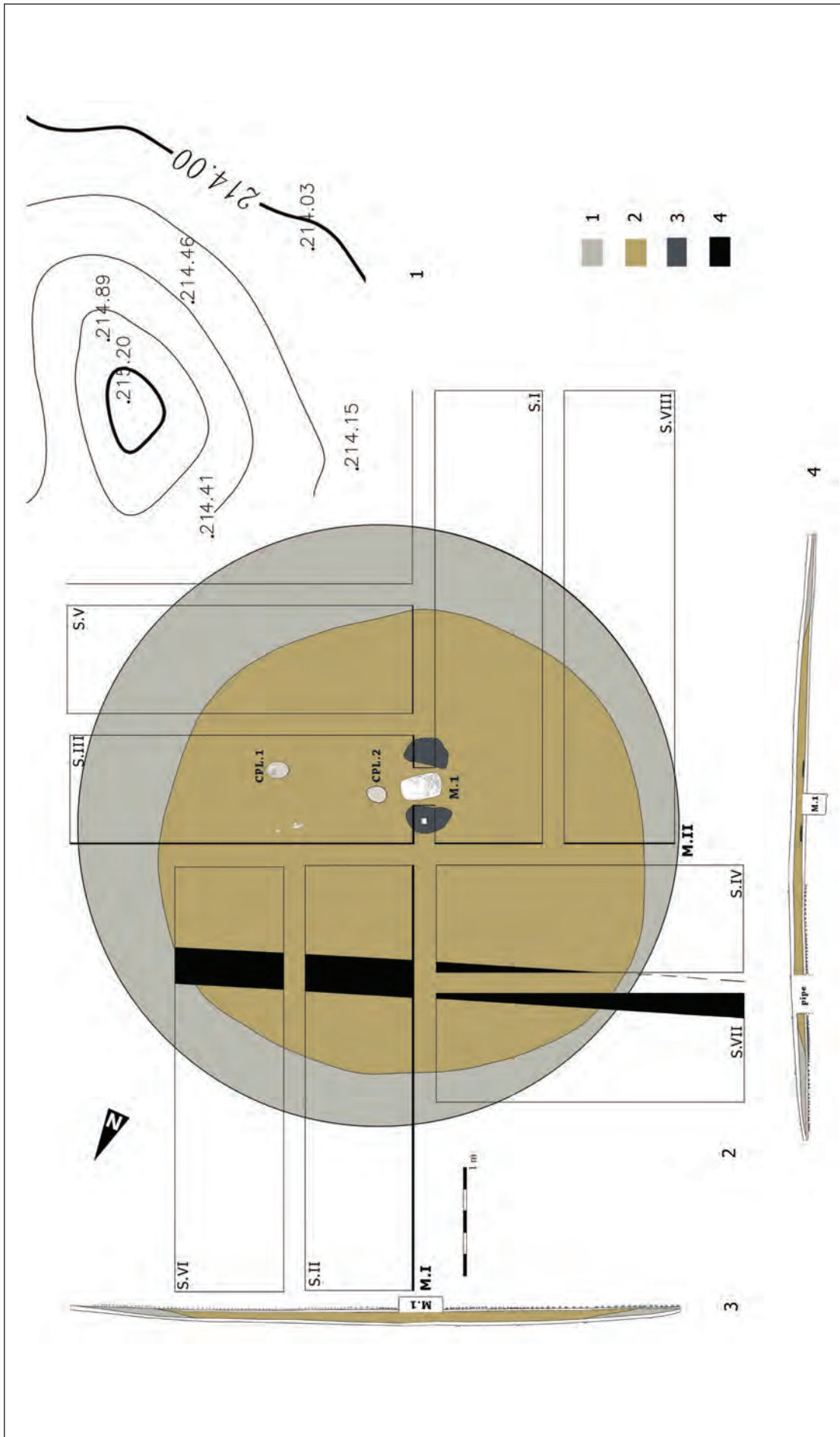


Plate 3. Topographic ground plan of the researched burial mound (1) and the general plan (2); the stratigraphic baulks (3-4); a=mound contour; b=mantle contour; c=gravel extracted from the grave pit; d=pipe line.



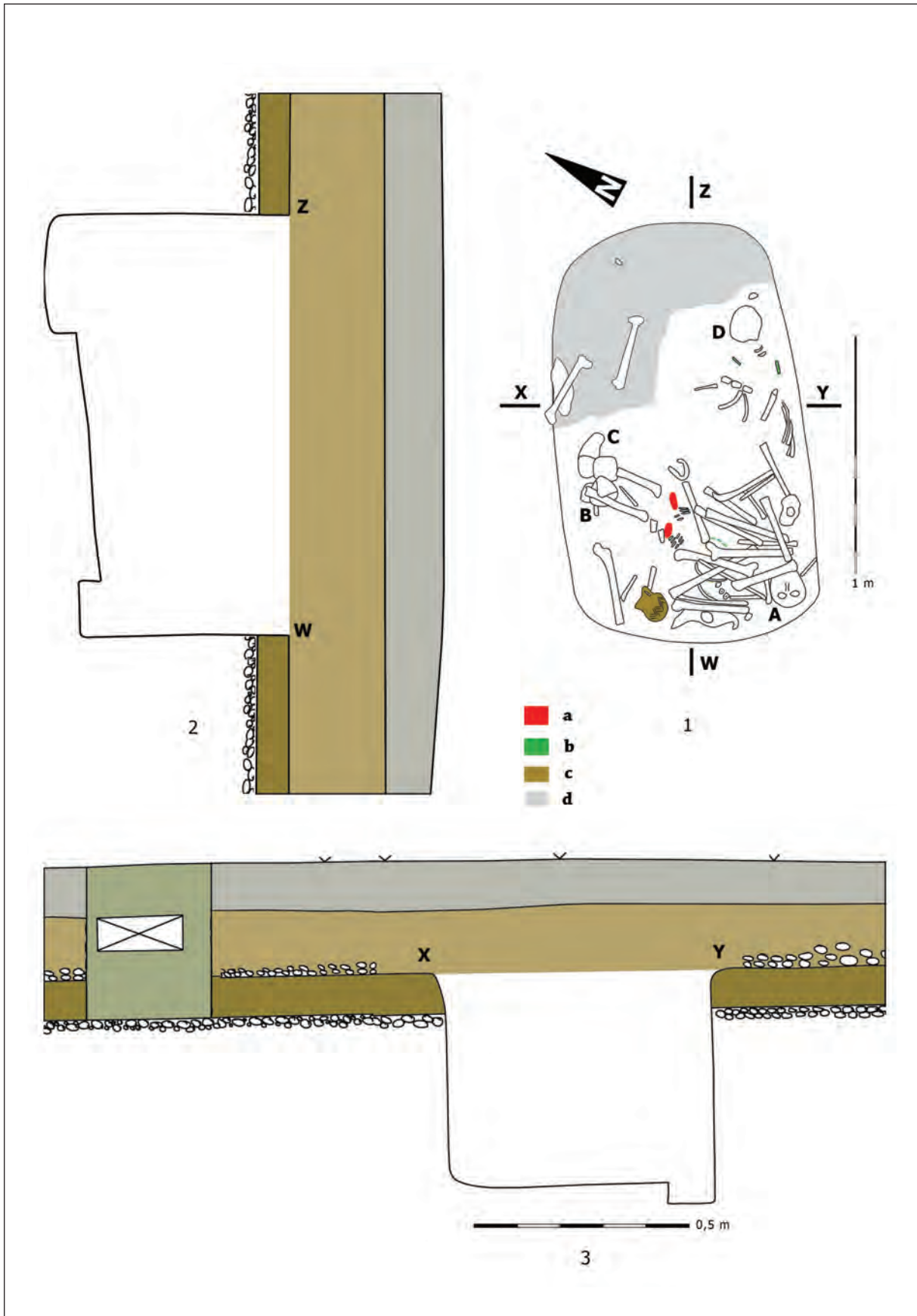


Plate 4. Ground plan (1) and stratigraphic profiles (2-3) of the grave discovered in Ariceștii-Rahtivani; a=ochre, b=copper items, c=pot, d=area affected by human interventions.



Plate 5. Aricești-Rahtivani: grave 1 (1–2) before the removal of the bones found in transitional position (1); details with the agglomeration of human bones and the *in situ* position of the pot (3–4).





Plate 6. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: grave 1 with details of the *in situ* position of the ornaments (1, 3-6) and of the flint knife (2).





Plate 7. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: Coțofeni cup discovered in Gr.1 (1-6); detail of the decoration (5).



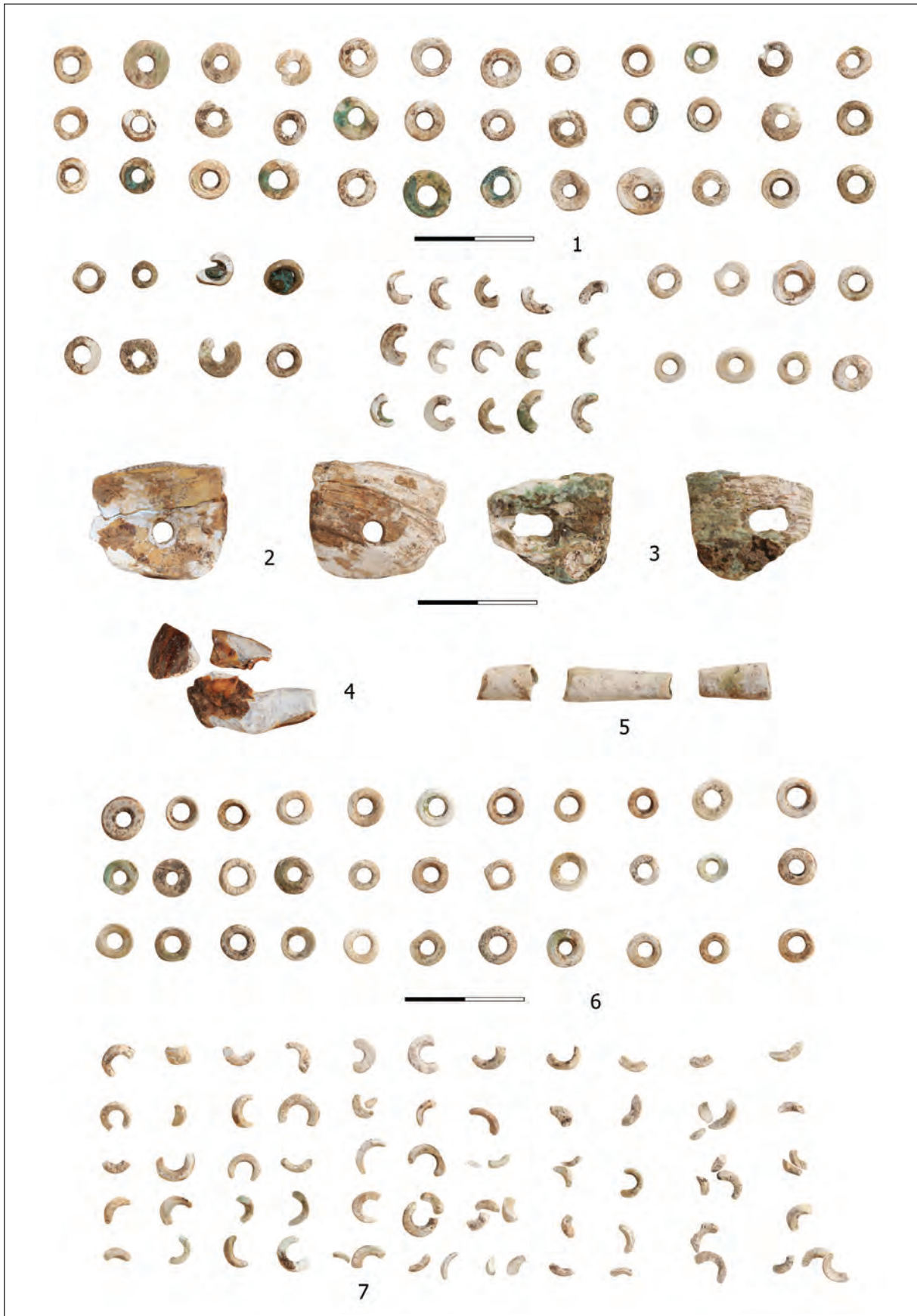


Plate 8. Ariceştii-Rahtivani: ornaments made of *Unio* shells (1-4, 6-7) and *Dentalium* shells (5) discovered in Gr.1.

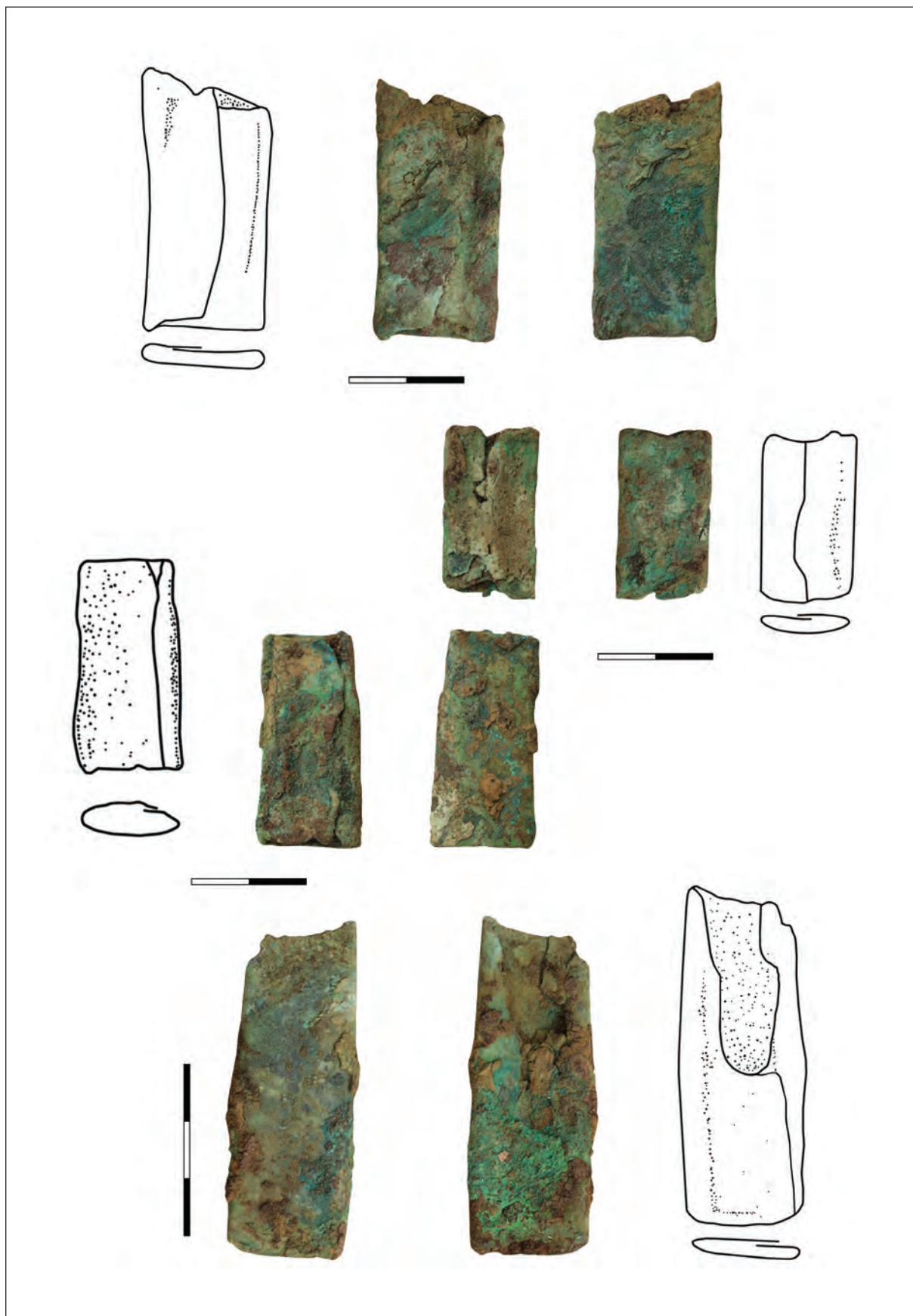


Plate 9. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: small copper plates discovered in Gr.1.



Plate 10. Ariceştii-Rahtivani: tubular copper items discovered in Gr.1.



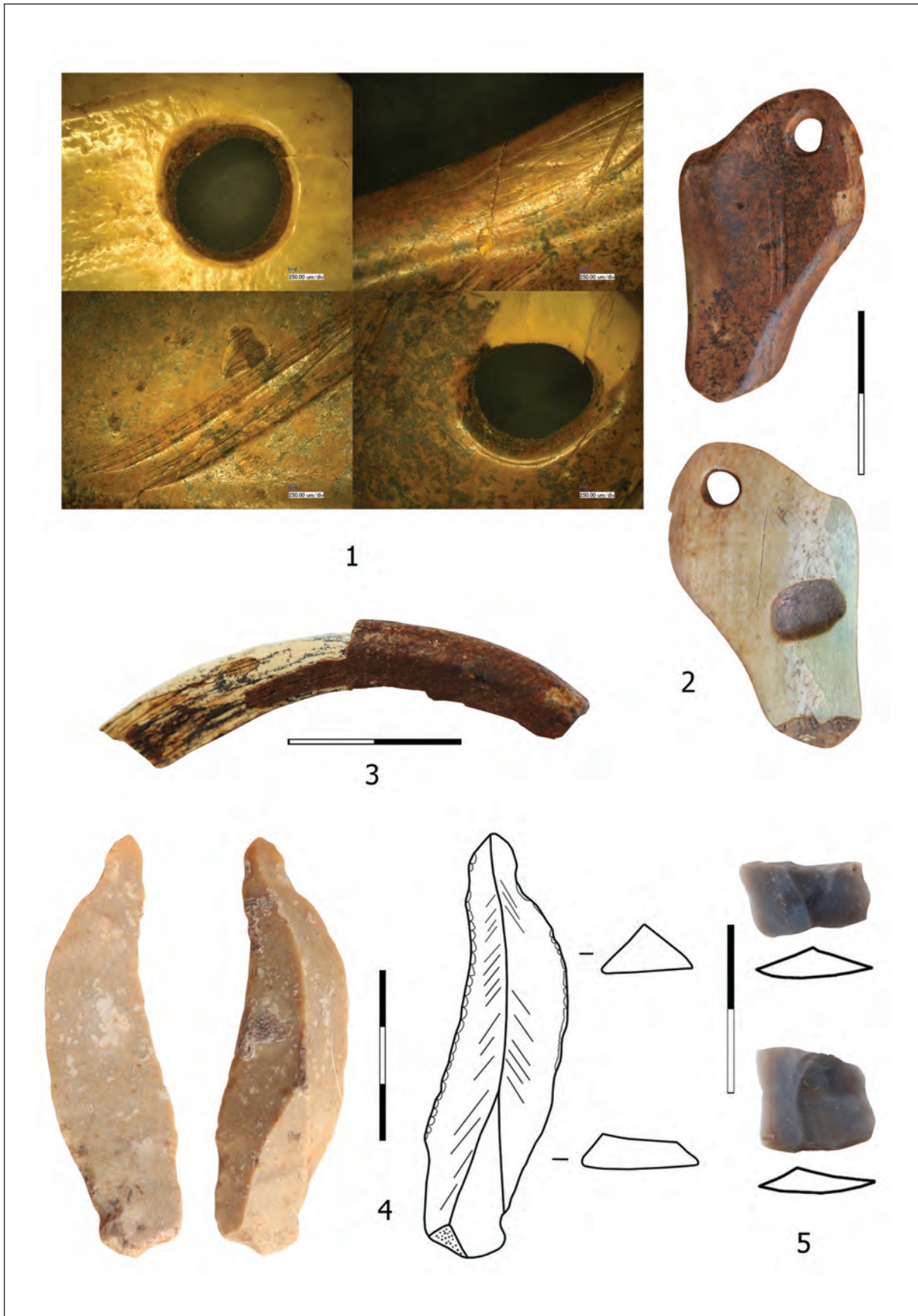


Plate 11. Ariceştii-Rahtivani: ornaments made of swine canine teeth (1-3) and flint items (4-5) discovered in Gr.1.





Plate 12. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: *in situ* pottery in Feature 1 (Cpl.1) (1, 3) and on the ancient surface level (2).

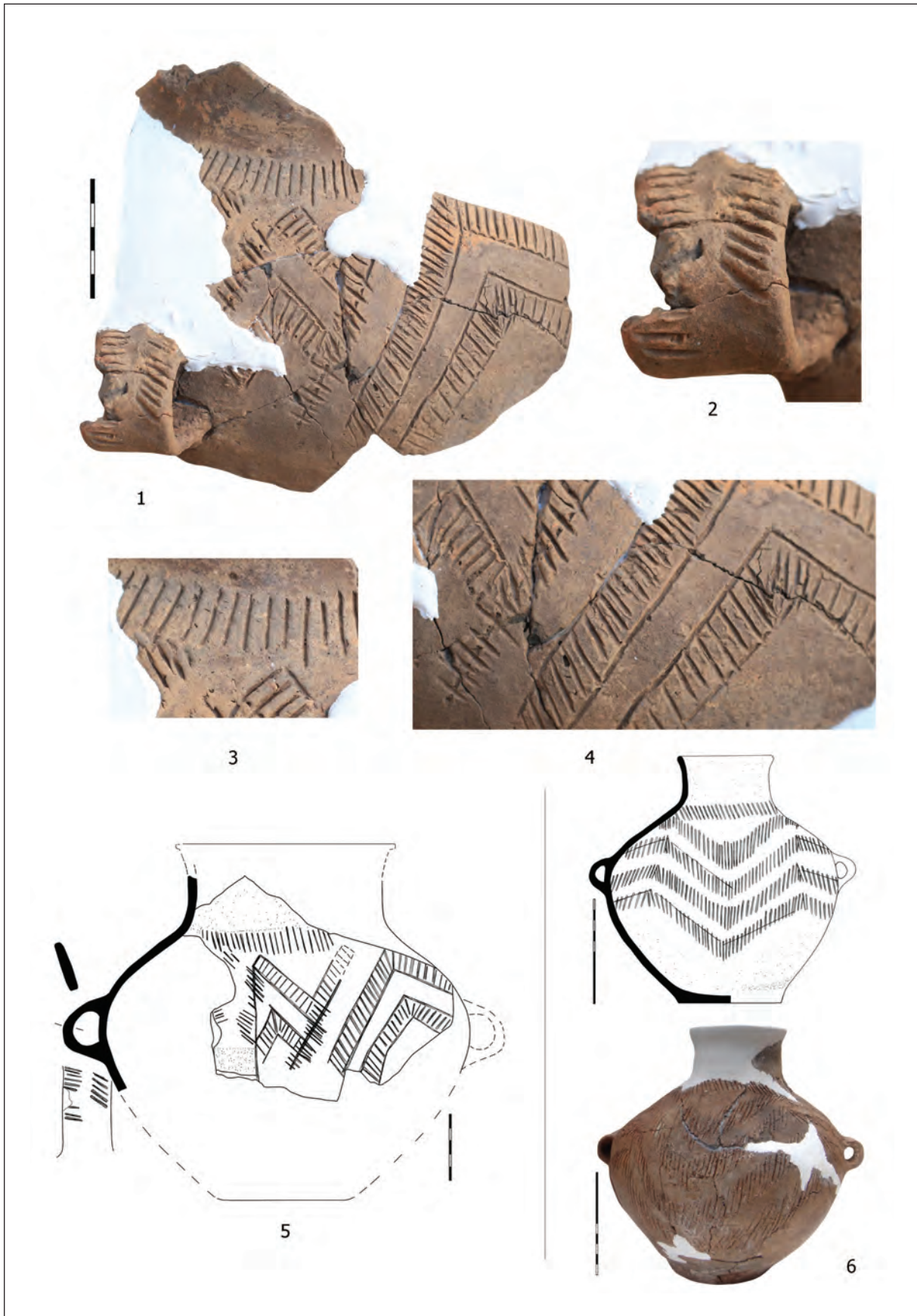


Plate 13. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: pottery from Feature 1 (*Cpl.1*) (1–5); pot discovered in grave 3/mound IV in Ariceștii-Rahtivani (6) (taken from Frînculeasa *et al.* 2014, pl. 5/4, 7).



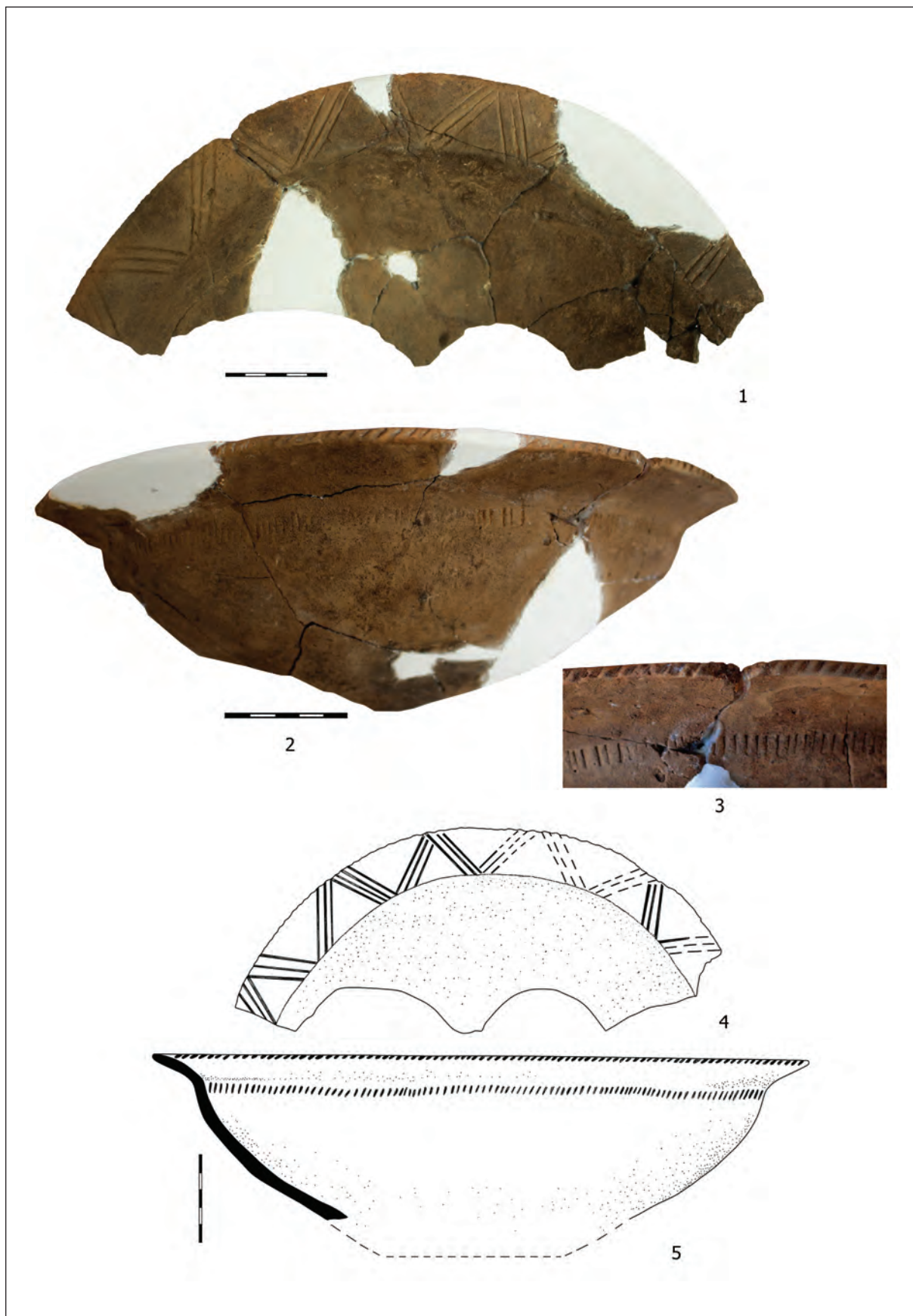


Plate 14. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: decorated bowl discovered in Feature 1 (Cpl.1) (1-4); detail of the decoration on the body and rim (3).



Plate 15. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: pottery from Feature 1 (*Cpl.1*) (1-4) and on the ancient surface level (5-7).



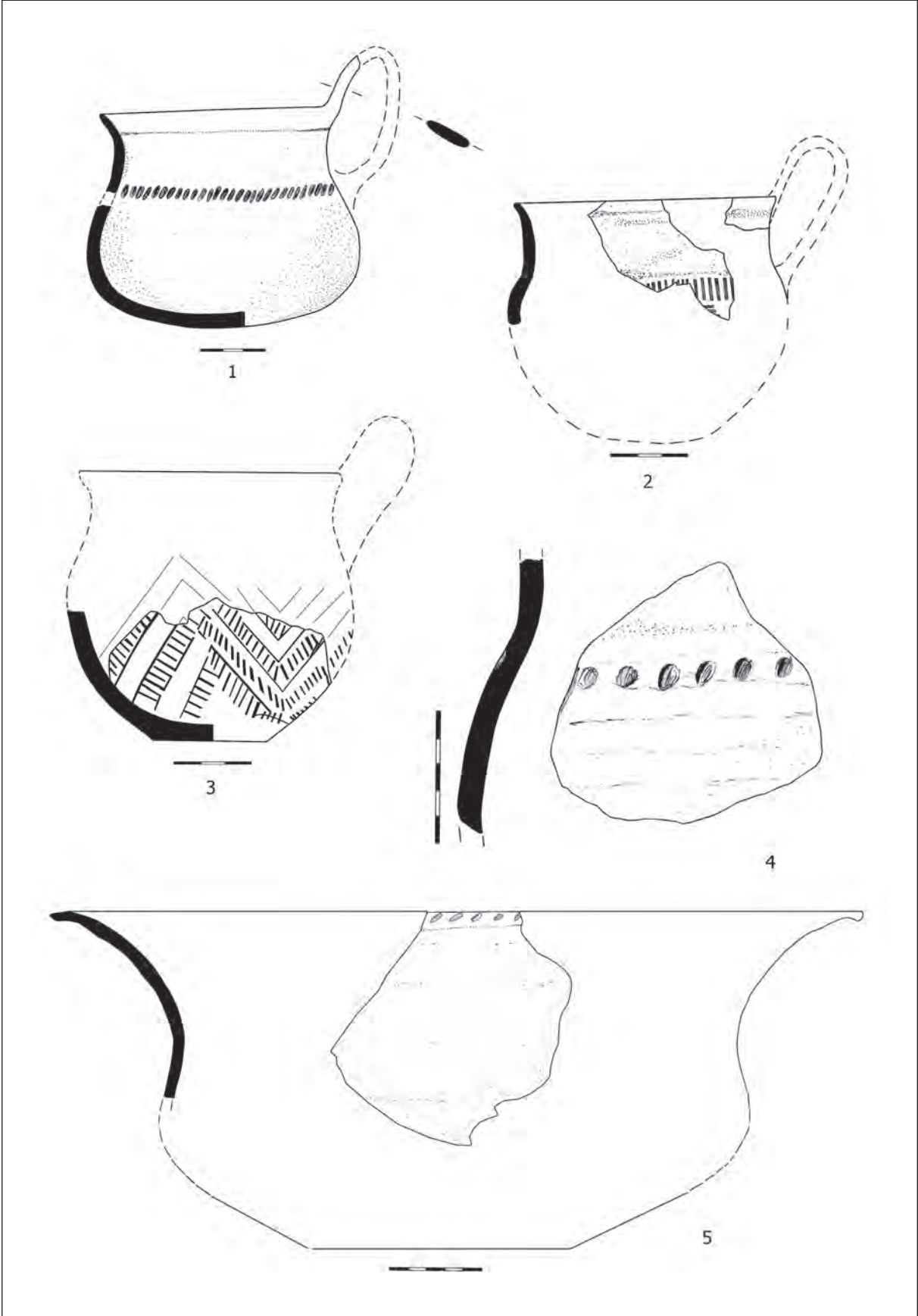


Plate 16. Ariceștii-Rahtivani: pottery from Feature 1 (Cpl.1) (1-3) and on the ancient surface level (4-5).



Plate 17. Pottery discovered in Mound VI from Ariceștii-Rahtivani (a-e) and analogies from Păulești Mound IV/grave 3 (1), Suharu (2), Locusteni (3), Râmnicu Vâlcea (4, 6), Silvașu de Jos (5), Zalužice (7), Sântana (8), Sântimbru (9), Orlea (10), Racova (11), Cernavoda (12) (taken from works mentioned in the text).

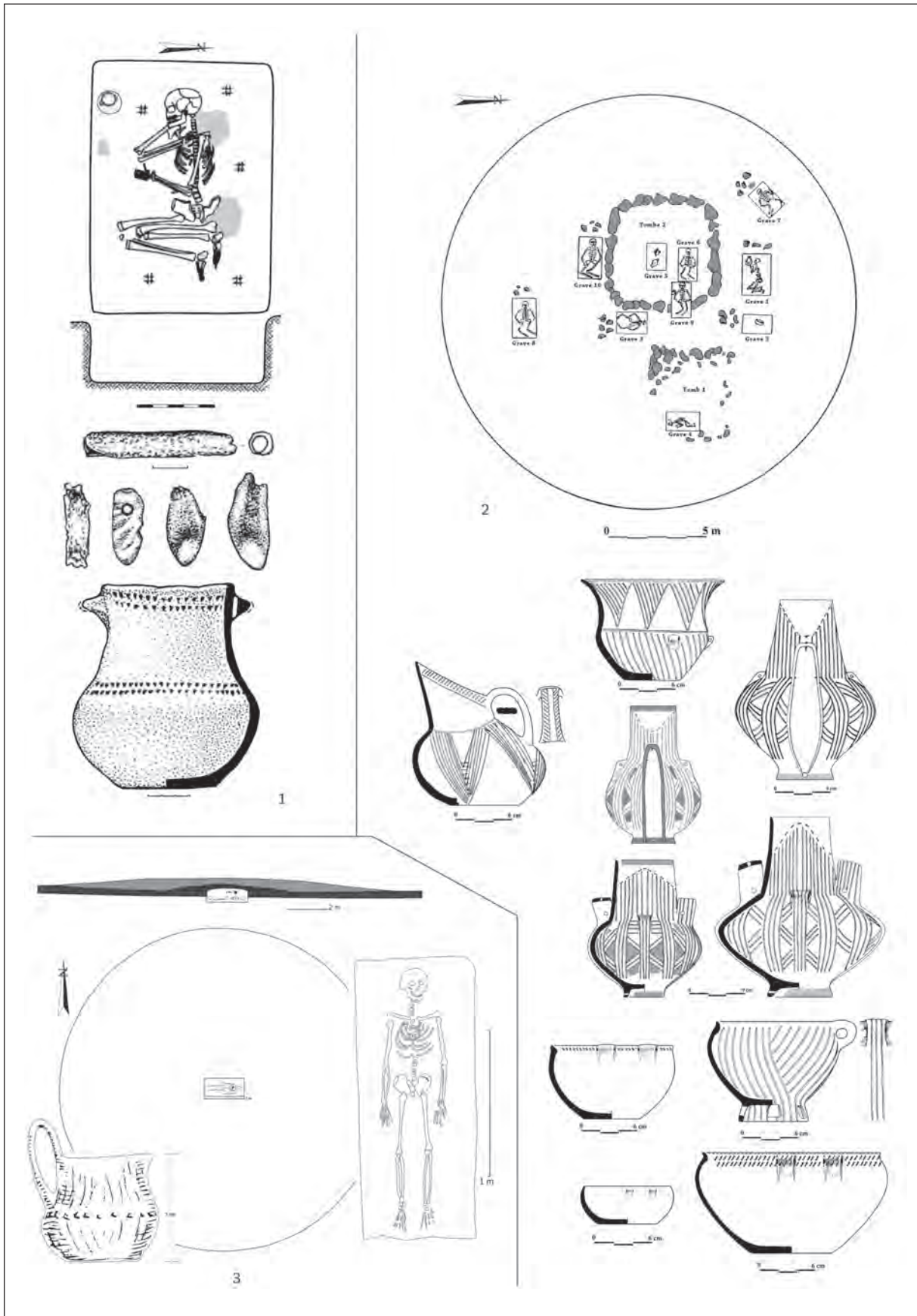


Plate 18. The burial mounds that have revealed Coțofeni pots: Taraklia II, Mound 14/grave 16 (1), Târnovo (2), Suhu (3) (taken from Agulnikov 1995; Alexandrov 2019; Frînculeasa et al. 2017c).



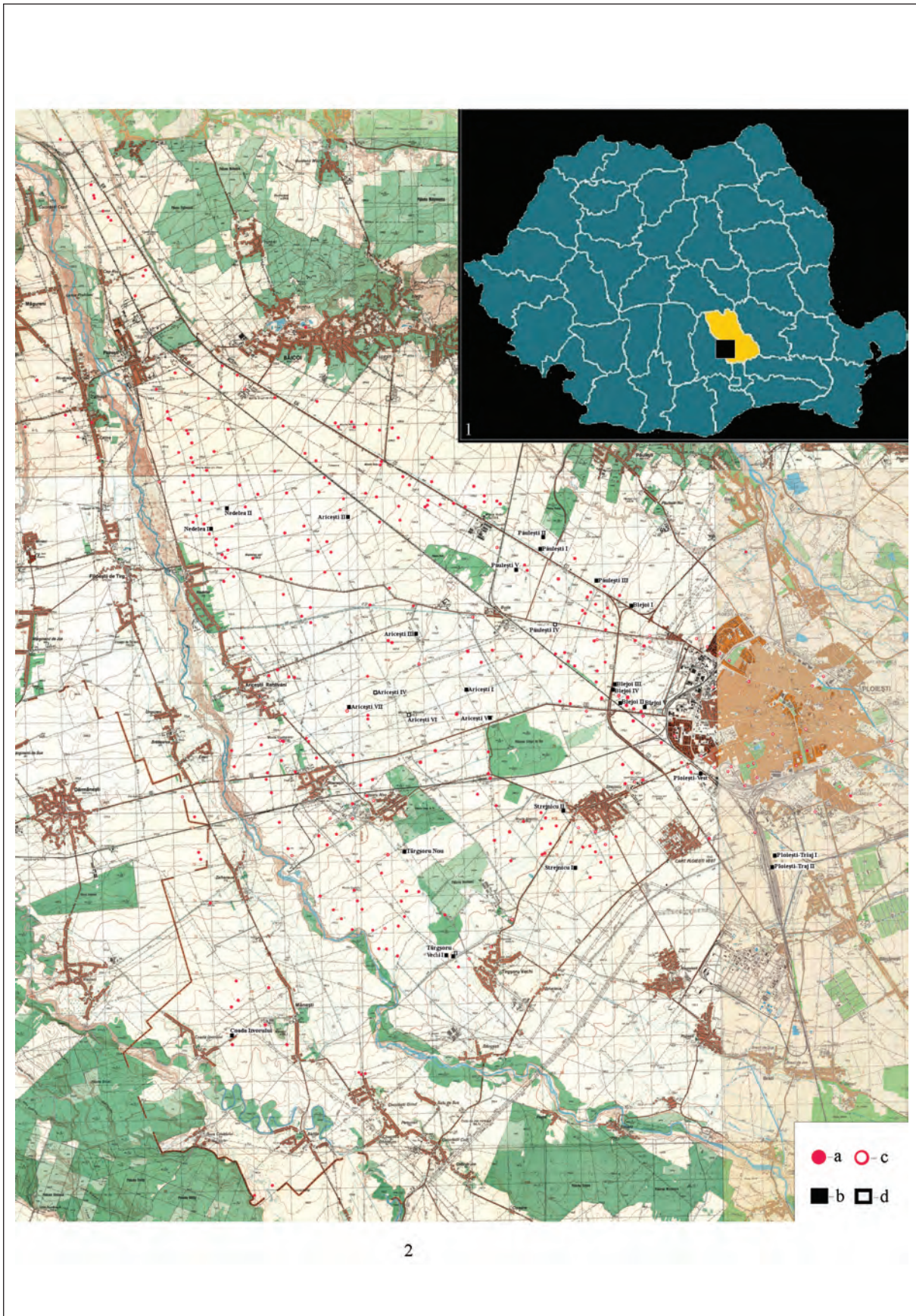


Plate 19. Romania and *The Prahova Area* (1) and researched burial mounds (1-2): circle=mounds (a); square=researched burial mounds (b); empty circle=destroyed burial mounds (c); empty square=burial mounds where Coțofeni pottery was discovered (d).



# Abbreviations

ActaArchHung	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae.
AAC	Acta Archaeologica Carpathica, Cracow.
ActaMN	Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca.
ActaMP	Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău
AnArchRessoviensia	Analecta Archaeologica Ressoviensia, Rzeszów.
AAS at CEU	Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU, Budapest.
Apulum	Acta Musei Apulensis – Apulum, Alba-Iulia.
Alba Regia	Alba Regia, Székesfehérvár.
Antaeus	Antaeus, Budapest.
Arrabona	Arrabona, Győr.
ArhMed	Arheologia Medievală, Cluj-Napoca, Brăila, Reșița.
ArchBaltica	Archaeologia Baltica, Vilnius.
Arch.Inf	Archäologische Informationen.
ATS	Acta Terrae Septemcastrensis, Sibiu.
ArchÉrt	Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapest.
Banatica	Banatica, Reșița.
BBMÉ	A Béri Balogh Ádám Múzeum Évkönyve, Szekszárd.
BUFM	Beiträge zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte Mitteleuropas.
BCMI	Buletinul Comisiei Naționale a Monumentelor, ansambluri situri istorice. București.
CommArchHung	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungaricae, Budapest.
CCA	Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice, Comisia Națională de Arheologie, București.
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin.
CMA	Complexul Muzeal Arad.
Dolgozatok	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Múzeum érem- és régiségtárából, Cluj.
Dolg.	Dolgozatok a Magyar Királyi Ferencz József Tudományegyetem Archaeologiai Intézetéből, Szeged.
Dolg. ÚS	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Múzeum Érem- és Régiségtárából, Új Sorozat. Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár.
EphNap	Ephemeris Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca.
HOMÉ	A Hermann Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve. Miskolc.
JAHA	Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology, Cluj-Napoca.
JAM	Jósa András Museum, Nyíregyháza.
JPMÉ	Janus Pannonius Múzeum Évkönyve.
JRGZM	Jahrbuch des Romisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, Mainz.
KRRMK	Kaposvári Rippl Rónai Múzeum Közleményei, Kaposvár.
LMI	Lista monumentelor istorice, updated in 2015.
MittArchInst	Mitteilungen des Archäologischen Instituts der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
MOL	Magyar Olaj- és Gázipari Részvénytársaság / Hungarian Oil and Gas Public Limited Company
Marisia	Marisia, Târgu Mureș.
NyJAMÉ	A nyíregyházi Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve, Nyíregyháza.
PBF	Praehistorische Bronzefunde. Berlin.
Przegląd Archeologiczny	Przegląd Archeologiczny, Wrocław.
Rad	Jósa András Museum, Archaeological Archive
RégFüz	Régészeti Füzetek, Budapest.



RKM	Régészeti Kutatások Magyarországon/Archaeological Investigations in Hungary, Budapest.
RAJ Arad	Repertoriul Arheologic al Mureşului Inferior. Judeţul Arad. Timişoara 1999.
RAN	Repertoriul Arheologic Naţional.
Sargetia	Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis, Deva.
SCIV(A)	Studii şi Cercetări de Istorie Veche şi Arheologie, Bucureşti.
SGB	Studii de Geografie a Banatului, Timişoara.
SIB	Studii de Istorie a Banatului, Timişoara.
Slavia Antiqua	Slavia Antiqua, Poznań.
SlovArch	Slovenská Archeológia, Nitra.
SMK	Somogyi Múzeumok Közleményei, Kaposvár.
SovArh	Sovetskaja Arheologija, Moskva.
SRTM	Shuttle Radar Topography Mission.
StudiaUBB Historia	Studia UBB Historia, Cluj-Napoca.
SzKMÉ	A Szántó Kovács Múzeum Évkönyve, Pécs.
Századok	Századok, Budapest.
Terra Sebus	Terra Sebus. Acta Musei Sabesiensis, Sebeş.
Tibiscum S. N.	Tibiscum S. N., Caransebeş.
TransRev	Transylvanian Review, Cluj-Napoca.
ZalaiMúz	Zalai Múzeum, Zalaegerszeg.
ZSA	Ziridava. Studia Archaeologica. Arad.
Živa Antika	Živa Antika, Skopje.