Endangered monuments: in rescue of the mutilated and anonymous burial mounds of the steppe

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Abstract. In a succession of studies published in the past years I approached the topic of the research methodology of prehistoric mounds (4th-3rd millennia BC). If in the case of tumuli that are preserved intact research can follow a predictable pattern/course, for the ones that have been already destroyed some additional stages are necessary. The first important step is identifying them by studying the cartographic record, followed by field survey. After the identification of the mound, the archaeological research solutions can be adjusted and customized according to the degree of destruction, the terrain topography, the boundaries of private properties, the proportion of land covered by new buildings, etc. In this paper are presented the results of the archaeological research of several burial mounds located in Prahova County, that were destroyed by anthropogenic interventions. In this area, framed by the Prahova and Teleajen Rivers, we have investigated around 30 tumuli, excavated with the help of mechanised equipment. The methods that were applied and the results obtained have been published *in extenso* in other studies. Below, we provide information regarding rescue archaeological excavations carried out in several burial mounds located in the villages of Nedelea, Târgşoru Vechi, Târgşoru Nou, Ariceştii-Rahtivani and Blejoi. Following the presentation of descriptive information, we will formulate some conclusions regarding the present state and future perspectives of these funerary monuments.
Keywords: tumuli, funerary monuments, grave, Prahova area, Yamnaya.

Monumente în pericol: salvarea movilelor funerare mutilate şi anonime din stepă. Într-o succesiune de studii apărute în ultimii am abordat metodologia de cercetare a tumulilor preistorici (mileniile IV-III). Dacă pentru tumulii păstraţi intacţi cercetarea poate urma un curs previzibil, în cazul celor distruşi sunt necesare mai multe etape. În prima fază importantă este identificarea acestora prin studierea arhivei cartografice, urmează apoi verificările în teren. După identificare, soluţiile de cercetare arheologică pot fi adaptate punctual în funcţie de gradul de distrugerea a acestora, de topografia locului, limitele proprietăţilor, încărcătura terenului cu noi construcţii, etc. În acest articol publicăm rezulatele cercetării mai multor tumuli distruşi de intervenţii antropice, situaţi în sud-estul judeţului Prahova. În acest areal, cadrat de râurile Prahova şi Teleajen, am cercetat în jur de 30 de tumuli, excavaţi cu ajutorul unor utilaje

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mecanizate, iar metodele aplicate și rezultatele au fost publicate *în extenso* cu alte ocazii. Redăm mai jos informații despre o serie de tumuli săpați în regim de cercetare arheologică preventivă, dispuși în localitățile Nedelea, Târgșoru Vechi, Târgșoru Nou, Ariceștii-Rahtivani și Blejoi. După informațiile cu caracter descriptiv, vom formula câteva concluzii legate de prezentul și viitorul acestor monumente funerare.
Cuvinte cheie: tumuli, monumente funerare, mormânt, areal Prahova, Iamnaia.

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Introduction

Burial mounds are a category of funerary monuments whose distribution in time and space is relevant enough to make them familiar/known beyond the circle of archaeologists/researchers. Usually, they are the context of spectacular discoveries suitable to be exhibited to the wider audience/public. Apart from the ideal situations when the burials are well preserved, some of them were destroyed in ancient times, as a result of looting or *damnatio memoriae*, archaeological contexts have been disturbed, archaeologists feel slightly frustrated. Witnessing the mutilation of these monuments is the most disturbing reality because it is accompanied by the awareness that there is no place in the present, and probably the future as well, for designing solutions to save them, with the exception of specific, particular situations related to the proper functioning of a set of accepted rules/laws. These funerary monuments coexist with a petty society, in which they are systematically assaulted and they survive only to the extent that their preservation is correlated with and assessed in terms of a positive economic impact. In the earthen mounds dating from the beginning of the Bronze Age we do not find what the public expects of us, but anonymous individuals of a past that cannot be changed to fit the imperative commands of the present. The relevance of these solitary mounds rather resides in the message they convey over time.

When it comes to dealing with the destruction of archaeological sites, one can notice speeches postulating unrealistic solutions are being intensely practiced in more or less public settings. It is not the purpose of this study to reverberate the too many debates resulting in too few actions/outcomes. In general, no effort is made to put on paper those not at all comfortable aspects archaeology is facing and despite which this still innocent science must survive. In people's conscience archaeology has an immaculate image, it leaves no room for disappointments. In reality, however, the archaeological practice is strongly personalised, being an accumulation of contours with nuances from bright to unaesthetic. The personality of the archaeologist is still very important, with his own brightness and shadows wrapped in the same package.

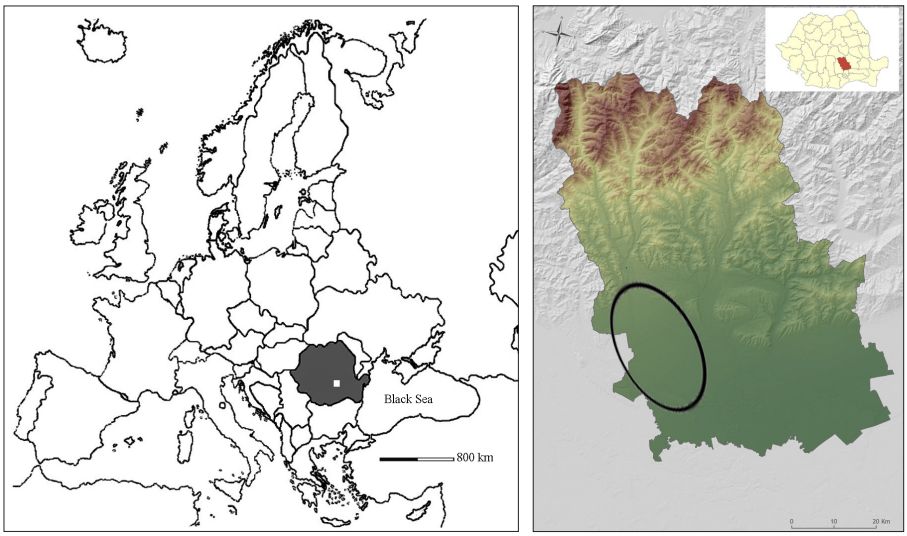


Fig. 1. Romania (a) and the location of the *Prahova area* (b)
Fig. 1. România (a) și amplasarea *arealului Prahova* (b)

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In two recently published articles we approached the research methodology used to investigate vanished prehistoric mounds. If the former is a rather theoretical approach based on the study of maps correlated with the mapping process (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a), the latter is the result of the excavation of a destroyed mound (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a). We brought to the surface two different perspectives of the same story: the identification of vanished mounds and their archaeological investigation. In this study we present the results of the archaeological excavations carried out in several mounds from the *Prahova area*, destroyed by anthropogenic interventions. In this region more than 350 mounds were identified (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a; 2018; 2020), out of which about 30 were investigated (**Fig. 1**; **Pl. I**). All the mounds were excavated with mechanized equipment, and the methods used were explained *in extenso* on other occasions (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017b; 2018; 2019a). Some information can be found in already published studies (Frînculeasa 2019; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a) or are in the publishing process (Frînculeasa 2020a; 2020b; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2020).

Destroyed mounds in *Prahova Area* – case studies

Nedelea (Ariceștii-Rahtivani locality)

1. Nedelea – the mound was located in parcel no. 5, north of the Nedelea village, 1.1 km north of the DJ101, east of the De16 (coordinates: 44°59'11.76" N, 25°49'24.36"). It had a height of about 0.6 m and a diameter of 25 m. A trench had been dug in the central area, 12 m long, 3.6 m wide and at least 0.5 m deep (**Pl. 2/1-2**). The walls of the trench were subjected to a continuous process of erosion, further contributing to the destruction of the mound. The site was also in danger to be used as soil quarry. In 2015 rescue archaeological research was conducted. Two parallel trenches were excavated (S.I and S.II), crossing the entire mound from north to south. They were 25 m long, 5 m wide and were separated by a stratigraphic baulk 1 m thick (baulk I). Another stratigraphic baulk 1 m thick (baulk II), was oriented on the east-west direction, interrupted by trenches I and II. This baulk divided the remaining area of the mound (the periphery) into four surfaces, two in each of the western and eastern sectors, added to the two trenches (**Pl. 2/3**).

Stratigraphy: I. plough/arable layer, about 0.20-0.25 m thick, grey colour; II. reddish clayey layer, partially covering the original mantle, between 0.10-0.20 m thick, its thickness increased towards the periphery of the mound up to 0.60 m; this layer was not present in the central area of the mound, but only in the outer quarter of its diameter; III. mantle?, had a grey colour upon drying, dusty texture, clay mixed with small pebbles, maximum thickness of 0.40 m; IV. ancient surface layer, about 0.20 m thick, brown colour, dusty texture, clay mixed with pebbles; V. natural gravel deposit.

A single feature was uncovered, labelled as **Pit 1 (Groapa 1),** identified in S.I and under baulk 1. It became visible at a depth of -0.70 m from the zero point, it was oval-shaped, oriented approximately west-east, it had dimensions of 1×0.60 m and it deepened 0.20 m in the natural gravel deposit. The filling of the pit was brownish and had a friable, clayey texture and it did not contain any archaeological traces or objects. This feature was destroyed as a result of unauthorised mechanised excavations disturbing the mound in the central area. Taking into account the fact that the mantle was not clearly visible on the profile as well as the depth of the pit, it is possible that this feature was a secondary one, cutting through the entire mound. The mound most likely formed as a result of remodeling an originally small natural elevated area. Given the size of the pit, the possibility that this feature was a burial of a sub-adult individual whose bones have not been preserved should not be ruled out. It was also possible to notice that the bottom of the trench that had been excavated into the mound reached the ancient layer.

2. Nedelea – the mound was located in parcel no. 5, north of Nedelea and south of Florești village, south of De130, 650 m north-east of mound no. 64 (T.64) (coordinates:

44°59'29.63"N, 25°49'44.24"E). In 2015 test excavations were conducted which revealed that the mound was destroyed, the traces of excavations with mechanized equipment were indications that the mound was used as a soil quarry (**Pl. 3**). For the most part, the mound had been excavated to the level of the natural gravel deposit, which is -0.30 m beneath the current surface. Only a small area was preserved in the western side of the mound, of an irregular shape, covering a surface of about 8×4 m and was about 0.8 m high. Correlating the information available on Google Earth one could notice that in the image captured on 15.03.2011 the mound was yet untouched, while in the one on 06.09.2012 it had already been destroyed.

Given that the land was not exploited agriculturally, in 2019 archaeological research was conducted with the precise purpose of identifying and saving the main burial and any other possible secondary features that might have been preserved within the remaining area of the mound. Its western periphery seemed undisturbed, therefore starting from there we drew several axes and imagined where the centre should be if the mound would have had diameters of 40, 35 and 30 m, in order to try to identify it. Following, the entire surface already destroyed was cleaned in order to be able to observe any possible pits/interventions cutting the natural gravel deposit (**Pl. 4**). The next step consisted of investigating the preserved area of the mound which contained one burial **(Grave 1)**.

The grave was identified at a depth of about -0.50 m (from the upper preservation level of the mantle). The grave pit was rectangular with dimensions of 1.80×1.15 m, 0.90 m deep, west-east oriented. The gravel dug out from the pit was deposited along the long sides of the pit, at about 0.35-0.40 m away from its edges, forming two elongated small mounds (length = 3.50×1.60 m; maximum height = 0.42 m/N and 0.30 m/S) (**Pl. 4/3-4**; **5/1-2**). The deceased had been laid on his back with the knees raised, which subsequently fell on the left, the upper limbs were stretched along the body, slightly flexed at the elbows (the left hand was placed on the pelvis). The orientation was west-east, the skull westwards (**Pl. 5**). Anthropological determination: 12-15 years old, indeterminable (Frînculeasa 2019, p. 136). C14-AMS dating = 4225±37 BP/2910-2674 cal BC (sigma 2, 95.4% probability). Taking into account the distance between the preserved area and the location of the main burial, the original mound might have had a diameter of about 35 m. Its original height is difficult to assess, however, if it was similar to other mounds in the *Prahova area*, it could have ranged between 1.2-1.5 m.

Târgșoru Nou (Ariceștii-Rahtivani locality)

3. Târgșoru Nou – in 2019 was investigated *Movila de la Pădure,* located 170 m south of *Pădurea Crângu lui Tei*, in parcel no. 107, south of the Târgșoru Nou village, south of De531 and east of the Hc524 canal (coordinates: 44°54'22.57"N,

25°53'19.57"E). On top of the mound there was a concrete fence, belonging to Cc558, a space in which a farm functioned before 1990 (**Pl. 6/1-4**). The northern third of the mound was behind the fence and had already been excavated to the level of the current surface. At first, photographs were taken with both cameras and drone. On the aerial photos one could notice the outline of the mound, including in the area already excavated, and in this way we were able to determine the diameter of the entire mound (**Pl. 6/2, 4**). Therefore, we could place the stratigraphic baulk in the centre of the original mound, which had a maximum diameter of 25 m and a height of 1 m. We opted in favour of preserving two stratigraphic baulks, the main one crossing the entire mound from east to west, while the second, shorter one was oriented perpendicular and crossed the southern part of the mound, which was completely preserved. This resulted in an excavation with T-shaped stratigraphic baulks. The baulks were 1 m thick and had lengths of 27 m (I) and 16 m (II), the former was oriented east-west (stratigraphic baulk I) and the latter north-south (stratigraphic baulk II). This layout of the baulks created three surfaces, labeled/numbered according to their position in relation to stratigraphic baulk II: 1 – the south-eastern surface; 2 – the south-western surface; 3 – the northern surface, which was excavated horizontally north of stratigraphic baulk I.

Stratigraphy: I. plough/arable layer, about 0.20-0.25 m thick, brown colour; II. the mantle had reddish colour, became grey upon drying, dusty texture, clay mixed with small pebbles, maximum thickness of 0.75 m; it was preserved mainly in the area of the primary burial; it had a diameter of about 23 m; III. grey layer with a maximum thickness of 0.35 m which decreased towards the periphery; IV. ancient surface layer, about 0.20 m thick, reddish-brown colour, dusty texture, clay mixed with pebbles; VI. natural gravel deposit.

Two burials were discovered in the centre of the mound, a secondary one belonging to Turkic nomadic populations dating from the 11-12th centuries AD (Gr. 1) and the primary burial of the mound, belonging to the Yamnaya communities (Gr. 2).

Grave 1 (Gr. 1) (**Pl. 7/1-4**) – was discovered in the central area of the mound, north of the main stratigraphic baulk. The outline of the grave pit was not visible. Inside the grave pit there was an individual, next to whom skeletal remains of a horse were found. Both the human and horse bones were found at -0.43-0.60 m depth. The deceased was an adult individual (40-50 years old) lying in extended position, oriented approximately east-west. The upper limbs were stretched along the body, only slightly bent at the elbows, the hands were placed on the pelvis. Next to the right elbow there was a bell-shaped pendant made of bronze. The artefact is globular, has bitruncated body and its lower part is slightly flattened; it has four triangular petals brought together and tightening/closing towards the

centre. In the upper part it has a loop for attaching the pendant. It is decorated with a horizontal groove above its maximum diameter, two parallel incisions and four perpendicular/vertical incisions made on the petals. Inside there is a ball (**Pl. 7/3-4**). Dimensions of the bell-shaped pendant: H = 31 mm, diameter = 24 mm, thickness = 2 mm, weight = 11.95 grams. The horse bones, consisting of the skull and parts of the limbs, were placed north of the human skeleton, parallel to the body (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2020).

Grave 2 (Gr. 2) (**Pl. 7/5-6**) – the grave pit of the main burial was identified in the centre of the mound at -0.75 m depth, its bottom reached -1.50 m. The pit had rectangular shape with slightly rounded corners, dimensions of 1.55×1 m, it was west-east oriented. Inside the pit there was a sub-adult individual (9 years old ± 24 months), west-east oriented, lying supine with the upper limbs stretched along the body and the knees initially raised, subsequently fallen to the right. Next to the right shoulder there was a lump of ochre. Traces of ochre were found north of the left shoulder and on other bones as well. C14-AMS dating: 4037±43 BP/2620-2487 cal BC (sigma 1, 68.2% probability) (Frînculeasa 2019, p. 135, fig. 3).

The mound was built over an older habitation layer, identified by a single archaeological feature, namely *Feature 1 (Cpl. 1)*. It was discovered in the central area of the mound and was cut by the pit of Gr. 2 and after that covered by the mantle raised over it (**Pl. 6/5**). The feature had the shape of an irregular mound (approximately 13.26×12.5 m), with a maximum thickness of 0.35 m in the centre. It was an accumulation of household waste consisting of ash, mammalian bones, fragmentary pottery, bone and stone tools, clay zoomorphic representations. The pottery was highly fragmented (2391 potsherds), tempered with fine or coarser sand and crushed pottery. Fine ceramics with compact paste and sometimes burnished surface was found, as well as semi-fine and coarse pottery, with pseudo-barbotine and barbotine (non-homogeneous paste). Among the pottery shapes can be mentioned dishes with a wide rim, amphora-shaped vessels, jars, bowls, mugs and large storage pots. Decoration was found on about 7% of the potsherds and it consists of rows of notches/short incisions placed on the rim and body, sometimes associated on the same vessel (**Pl. 8**). Bone tools were also found, of which need to be mentioned piercers but also chisels. Stone artifacts consist of one chisel and a fragment of a wedge axe, but also an unfinished axe, which most likely had or was supposed to have a shaft-hole. The pottery can be assigned to the Cernavoda II culture, being very similar to the one found in the eponymous site (Berciu *et alii* 1973) and the one from Bucureşti-*Dămăroaia* (Gavrilă *et alii* 2016). Three samples of mammalian bones for C14-AMS dating were selected from this feature, the results obtained indicating that the habitation feature dates from the

last quarter of the 4th millennium BC and the beginning of the next millennium (Frînculeasa 2020b).

Târgșoru Vechi (Târgșoru Vechi locality)

4. Târgșoru Vechi (**Pl. 9**) – in 2016 two mounds placed south of the *Pădurea Beizadele* were investigated. One of them, named *Movila de la Pădure*, has been already published (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017c; Frînculeasa 2019). The second mound, *Movila de la drum*, was located 150 m south-east of the first one and 300 m south of the *Pădurea Beizadele*. It had 25 m in diameter and a height of 0.5 m. Around the mound fruit trees had already been planted, therefore the research area was limited. Three trenches were investigated, oriented approximately north-south, 22 m long and 5 m wide, separated by stratigraphic baulks 1 m thick. The mound had a reddish clay texture. At the depth of 0.5 m there was the natural alluvial clay deposit of yellowish colour. The outline of a possible mantle was not visible on the stratigraphic profiles or in the trench. Four features were found in the centre of the mound, of which one dug-in oven (Ø=1.4 m), a rectangular pit (3.4×2.4 m), possibly a sunken house but without oven, a circular pit (Ø=0.9 m) and the foundations of a building with brick walls and a partial apse (7×5.5 m). All the features date from the 19th century. On the ENE-WSW direction the mound was crossed by a 0.4 m wide trench containing electrical cables. No burials were discovered, only atypical fragments of a hand-made pot, probably prehistoric.

Blejoi (Blejoi locality)

5. Blejoi – the archaeological site from *Tumul la Pod* was identified in 2016 during field surveys. It was located on the track of the western bypass of Ploiești city, close to the northern ramp of the bridge that overlaps the Ploiești-Brașov railway line. Although the mound was built on the edge of a slightly elevated area, it was hardly visible in the landscape. In the central area it still preserved a pile of earth with an approximately oval shape, covering a surface of about 30 square meters and a height of about 1.5 m. In the centre of this pile of earth there was a concrete pillar, the remaining part of a former geodetic reference point. The western area of the mound, covering about 20% of the entire site, was under the bypass track, while the eastern third had already been excavated to the natural gravel layer (**Pl. 10**). The mound was marked on several maps from the 19th - 20th centuries, while on the Topographic Map, code L-35-112-B-b, second edition from 1978 (scale 1:25000), there is a triangle representing the geodetic reference point (elevation 186.4 m) (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a, p. 37, pl. II/3).

The western third of the mound, which was under the road, remained unexplored and at the same time it was an obstacle impeding the application of

a more complex excavation methodology. Therefore, the excavations covered the surface of the maximum diameter of the mound, which was 30 m on the north-south direction, while on the east-west direction the maximum width of the excavation covered about 17 m. We opted for preserving two stratigraphic baulks 1 m thick, which crossed the entire mound on the north-south direction. The excavation was carried out by investigating three parallel surfaces, separated by the two baulks, in order to allow the access of the machine, but also to enable us to make conclusive observations regarding the stages of mound construction and its original dimensions before the disturbances caused by illegal excavations.

Stratigraphy: I. plough/arable layer, about 0.20-0.25 m thick, brown colour; II. the mantle became grey upon drying, it had dusty texture, made of clay mixed with small pebbles, a maximum thickness of 0.75 m; it was found only in the preserved area of the mound, close to the geodetic reference point; III. ancient surface layer, about 0.20 m thick, brown colour, dusty texture, clay mixed with pebbles; IV. natural gravel deposit. Three prehistoric burials were discovered, assigned to the Yamnaya communities.

Grave 1 (Gr.1) (**Pl. 11/1**) – secondary burial found in the central area of the mound, dug into the mound filling. It was identified at about -0.60 m deep from the highest preservation level of the mound, and -1.40 m from the layer preserved around the geodetic reference point. The pit was west-east oriented, had dimensions of 1.40×0.70 m and was rectangular with rounded corners. The burial contained the partially preserved osteological remains of an individual lying supine, west-east oriented, with the upper limbs stretched along the body and the hands placed on the pelvis, the knees initially raised, subsequently fell on the left side. Above the left shoulder were found a skull fragment and, to the south, two spiral hair rings. One was made of copper wire coated with a silver sheet, while the other one was made of silver. Inside the skull two more silver hair rings were found, with one and a half spirals, thinned and pressed ends (**Pl. 11/2-5**). Anthropological determination: female, older than 55 years. C14-AMS dating = 4212±29 BP/2900-2680 cal BC (sigma 2, 95.4% probability) (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a, p. 39).

No.	Material	Max. diameter	Thickness	Weight
1	silver	16 mm	4 mm	5.41 grams
2	copper coated with silver sheet	13 mm	4 mm	1.68 grams
3	silver	14-15 mm	3-4 mm	5.5-6 grams
4	silver	11-13 mm	2.5-3 mm	3-3.5 grams

Table 1. Hair rings found in grave 1
Tab. 1. Inele de buclă descoperite în mormântul 1

Grave 2 (Gr. 2) (**Pl. 11/6**) – secondary grave, discovered immediately below Gr. 1, after the bones were removed. The pit bottom of Grave 2 reached a depth of -1.50 m from the geodetic reference point. The pit was west-east oriented, had rectangular shape with rounded corners. The skeleton was in a very poor preservation state, lying supine, west-east oriented, with the upper limbs stretched along the body. The knees were initially raised, subsequently fell on the left side. North-north-west of the skull there were fragments of a small pot, badly preserved, with bitruncated shape and cord decoration. The paste was not well burnt, it had a brownish colour on the exterior and black on the interior, tempered with sand (**Pl. 11/7**). Near the skull there was an ochre lump and other traces of ochre were identified in the area of the lower limbs. Anthropological determination: *infans*, 9 months, indeterminable (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a, p. 39-40).

Grave 3 (Gr. 3) – is the main burial found in the centre of the mound. The pit was identified at a depth of -1.60 m, it was dug from the ancient surface and into the natural gravel layer. The pit bottom reached -2.10 m and the gravel removed from it was placed to the south, forming a layer about 10 cm thick. The pit was west-east oriented, it was rectangular with rounded corners, dimensions of 0.75×0.60 m, it narrowed towards the bottom. The individual was lying supine, west-east oriented, with the upper limbs stretched along the body and the lower limbs most likely initially bent at the knees and raised, subsequently fallen to both sides (rhombus). An ochre lump was found north of the left arm of the individual. Ochre traces were also found in the area of the pelvis and lower limbs (**Pl. 11/8**). Anthropological determination: *infans*, 9 months, indeterminable (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a, p. 40).

6. Blejoi – in 2015 test excavations were conducted in a mound identified in 2011, during field surveys. The mound was located 250 m north of the Bergenbier brewery and 240 m west of the access road to Selgros supermarket. It had a height of approximately 1.2 m and a maximum diameter of 30 m. The centre of the mound was crossed from north to south by a clogged military trench, 4-6 m wide and 200 m long. To the west there were several pits, parts of an anti-aircraft military facility built during World War II (**Pl. 12**). The excavation consisted of clearing the military trench in the hope that its bottom did not reach deeper than the ancient surface layer and therefore the main burial of the mound might be preserved. The excavation revealed that the trench was dug 1.5 m deep into the gravel layer, which was below the depth burial pits usually reach. Therefore, the research was stopped. The eastern quarter of the mound belonged to a different property and it remained unexcavated, while the western one was leveled and strongly affected by works done for the military facility. Stratigraphy: I. plough layer, about 0.25-0.30 m thick, brown colour, clayey texture; II. blackish lens covering only the periphery of

the mound, 0.20-0.40 m thick, clayey texture; III. mound mantle, maximum 0.80 m thick, with diameter of about 22 m, yellowish colour, clayey texture; IV. ancient surface layer, maximum 0.40 m thick, light brown to grey colour upon drying, clayey texture; V. natural gravel deposit.

Păulești

7. Păulești – in 2020 research was conducted in a mound located 50 m south of the high voltage power line, 660 m south-south-east of De60, 530 m east of Ploiești-Slănic railway. It had a height of about 0.6 m and a diameter of 30 m. In order to have stratigraphic control and develop the archaeological excavation in a sustained rhythm, two stratigraphic baulks were preserved, intersecting each-other in the central area of the mound. They were 30 m long and 1 m thick. This layout created four surfaces/quarters labelled/numbered according to their position in relation to stratigraphic baulk II: 1 – NW quarter; 2 – NE quarter; 3 – SE quarter; 4 – SW quarter. The western half of the mound was covered by crops and therefore only the eastern half could be excavated. The contour and the dimensions of the mantle were visible on the profiles of the preserved baulks, so its characteristics could be studied. Following the analysis of the profiles on the stratigrafic baulks of the eastern half of the mound, it was concluded that the mantle had grey colour, dusty non-homogenous texture, it had a diameter of about 19.30 m and a height of 0.4 m. To this was added the reddish plough layer about 0.30 m thick, that was getting thicker and blackish towards the periphery of the mound.

Only one feature was discovered, in the centre of the mound (**Pl. 13/4**). It was a rectangular pit with dimensions of approximately 5×4.5 m, -1.9 m deep measured from the 0 point and -1.1 m from the natural gravel layer. In the pit filling there was a significant quantity of construction materials such as bricks, lime/mortar, stones, some pottery fragments, as well as three bronze coins dating from the beginning of the 19th century. All the materials found in this pit were in secondary position. Although another surface was investigated west of this feature, with dimensions of 3×2.5 m, the main burial was not identified. The 19th century pit cut through the mantle in the central area and might have destroyed the main burial. The western half of the mound remained to be excavated.

The anonymous mounds of the steppe

The secret regime of some of the maps, especially the military/topographic ones, has for a long time prevented the study and use of the information they contain. An illustrating example is the catalogue of the earthen mounds in Banat, a work which echoes the amount of effort involved in the fieldwork that is required in

order to map these sites (Medeleț, Bugilan 1987). The same lack of cartographic sources can be seen in other studies in which numerous mounds are mapped (Varlam 1979; Brudiu 1991; 2003). Although references to the topic were made as early as the 1980s (Medeleț, Bugilan 1987, nota 3), the use of the old maps archive is only now becoming a common tool in the reconstruction of the archaeological landscape (Gogâltan *et alii* 2014; Ștefan 2015; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a; Diaconescu *et alii* 2017; Floca 2017; Ștefan, Bulei 2017; Sava, Gogâltan 2017). As for the burial mounds, the fact that they are marked on the old maps proved to be an opportunity for current research. The mounds located on the current territory of Romania are marked on the first maps known from the 18th century (Diaconescu *et alii* 2017), or even earlier, in 1699 (Medeleț, Bugilan 1987, p. 100). Returning to southern Romania (Muntenia), if on the early maps only a small number of mounds are marked, as we get closer to the 20th century they become much more visible (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a). On the topographic maps of the second half of the 20th century their number begins once again to decline.

The process of mapping mounds has gained visibility through both traditional surface surveys (Topoleanu *et alii* 2008; Fazecaș, Marta 2015; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015, fig. 3; Marta, Fazecaș 2018), for which old maps were used as well (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a; 2019a; Diaconescu *et alii* 2017; Floca 2017), but also through modern approaches (Oltean 2013). We mention here an exceptional study of the Prut – Dniester interfluve, which combines classic surface research with modern methodologies in order to map and reconstruct ancient archaeological landscapes (Topal *et alii* 2019). We also have to mention the huge amount of work done by Bede Ádám in eastern Hungary, mapping numerous earthen mounds (Marta, Gruia 2018, p. 60, note 12). The management of mounds is also a concern of Bulgarian researchers (Valchev, Sobotkova 2019).

In the *Prahova area* we were able to map approximately 350 mounds, some of which have completely disappeared from the landscape because of intense ploughing, as well as settlement development (civilian areas or public institutions such as churches), or road, industrial or agricultural (irrigation systems) infrastructure (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a). Reconstructing this cultural setting/landscape has been a decade-long activity consisting of surface surveys, gathering and studying an important number of cartographic materials from various institutions, but also conducting archaeological excavations (in the period between 2011 and 2020 no year has passed without excavating at least one mound). Some of these mounds were initially identified on maps and, later on, their existence was confirmed or refuted by the actual field situation or by the archaeological research.

The analysed cartographic archive was comprised of maps (18th to 20th century), estate plans (19th century) or plans of urban works (20th century). The main sources used were the *Specht Map* (1790-1791), *Charta României Meridionale* 1855-1859 (published in 1864), *Planurile Directoare de Tragere,* published and updated between 1924-1954, *Military topographic maps* (*Hărțile topografice militare) (second edition)* 1979-1981. Additionally, we used a broad cartographic database on which several unknown mounds were marked, as well as military maps from the beginning of the 20th century. Of these were useful the *Topographic map of Prahova County* (1:100000) of 1904, *Foaia Ploieștii* (1:100000), Series IX, column H made by the SGA in 1910 which includes topographic surveys conducted between 1895 and 1899, *Foaia Ploiescii* (1:50000), Series XIX, column P made and published by the IGA in 1900, the *Topographic Plan of Ploiești* made in 1902-1904 by the SGA (Sevastos 1937), as well as the *Military Topographic maps* (1958-1961, 1972-1981).

In order to be able to extend the analysis we used a series of estate plans (*planuri de moşie)* and boundary plans (*planurile de hotărnicii)* on which mounds are marked as well. These were used mainly in the 19th century and are cartographic representations that accompanied the *ocolnițe* or documents stating the boundaries of estates. They contain the boundary points of the estates gathered from documents, testimonials of the owners and estate neighbours, boundaries that were being marked by mounds, knolls and other significant natural or anthropic landmarks (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a). We mention the Păulești estate plan (*planul moșiei Păuleștiului)* from 1852 which synthesizes data from 1847-1859, the Turnu monastery estate plan (*planul moșiei mănăstirii Turnu)* made in 1843, the Ariceștii-Rahtivani estate plan (*planul moșiei Ariceștii-Rahtivani)* from 1857, the Blejoi estate plan (*planul moșiei Blejoi)* from 1844 (**Pl. 15**). Another map was drawn by Gh. Zagoritz at the beginning of the 20th century, its importance residing in the fact that several mounds are marked on it, of which one was previously unknown (Zagoritz 1914). We also mention the Soviet topographic maps (*Hărțile topografice sovietice)* (scale 1: 25000) which are identical to the Romanian ones, but on which appear several mounds whose existence was not confirmed by surface surveys. The existence of other mounds can be inferred from the toponymy preserved in the names of streets, neighbourhoods, places, mentioned in various studies related to the history of localities (Ilie 2012, p. 34). In fact, several mounds have toponyms such as *Movila Fluerarului, Movila cu Păr, Movila cu tufe, Movila cu cruce, Movila Verde, Movila Mare, Movila Vulpei, etc*, some still in use today. On the *Movila cu cruce* from Nedelea locality the stone cross is still preserved, although in fragmentary state (**Fig. 2**).



a



b

Fig. 2. Nedelea - *Movila cu Cruce*: the mound (a), fragments of the stone cross (b)
Fig. 2. Nedelea - *Movila cu Cruce*: tumulul (a), fragmente din crucea de piatră (b)

For the city of Ploiești, Sevastos' monograph of 1937 was useful for our research, as was the plan published by the architect N. Debie containing data gathered between 1830 and 1840, on which three mounds appear, out of which only one is preserved, but with a church built on top of it (Debie 1967, pl. II). Information about the existence of mounds on the territory of Ploiești city (with the related toponyms) can also be found in various documents regarding the development of the locality that were published over time (Zagoritz 1914, p. 33, 51; Ioachimescu 1914, p. 60; Vulpe, Vulpe 1924, p. 169, nota 2; Sevastos 1937; Sava-Petrescu 1937; Debie 1967, pl. II; Groșescu 2008, p. 141, 375-376, 394; Trestioreanu, Marinescu 2003, p. 107, 114; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a, p. 539; 2019b).

Discussions

One of the first conclusions to emerge after correlating all the mentioned sources with field research is that the real number of mounds is much higher than the one recorded on the existing cartographic materials, more precisely the used ones. Approximately 35% of the mounds were unknown, most of them have small sizes (less than 1 m high), but we also identified a small number of mounds

still very visible in the landscape (1-2 m high) which are not marked on the old maps.

On the final version of the map the situation looks much better than reality, due to the fact that examples of destroyed mounds are numerous and have continued to grow even in recent years, despite constant efforts to increase their visibility and raise awareness of the presence of this type of monuments in the local administration bureaucracy. Regarding the destruction of the mounds, a fluctuation in time can be noticed, which can be associated with the interwar period (1920-1940), the communist regime (1945-1990), recent time (1990-present), all of them being stages with specific economic dynamics (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a). We have to mention here the settlement expansion; the great industrialization, urban and rural development, large infrastructure works; the real estate market explosion; the exploitation of surface mineral resources – gravel, sand, salt, green energy resources such as aeolian, solar; the emergence of industrial parks. Thus, of all the checked mounds 67 were destroyed, as a result of the above mentioned factors (**Pl. 1**).

The largest number of mounds disappeared during the communist regime (41) when compared to the two other stages (7 and 20), as a result of unsustainable and massive industrial and urban development (Ploiești), not backed up by preventive archaeological research (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a). Another destructive activity is that of works on agricultural land carried out during the communist regime, such as dams, irrigation systems – water canals, plantations. Unlike Soviet archaeology (Ivanova 2013), the Romanian one did not have a program to save the mounds that were to be affected by these works. There were only some particular interventions within the framework of research programs carried out during the upsurge of the communist regime (in Romanian Moldavia), obviously following the Soviet methodology. We mention here the Valea Jijiei project with excavations in the mounds from Larga Jijia, Corlăteni, Glăvăneștii Vechi, Holboca, Valea Lupului (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017b, p. 26), also a little later excavations conducted in Dobrogea (Vasiliu 2002) or southern Moldavia (Brudiu 2003).

During the new regime installed after 1990 the mounds continued to be destroyed at faster pace than during the previous stage, the greatest threat being now the exploitation of mineral aggregates from the terrace (as examples the exploitation pits from Strejnicu, Ariceștii-Rahtivani, Ploiești, Târgșoru Nou), borrow pits (Nedelea), but also the development of neighbourhoods and residential areas (Târgșoru Vechi, Strejnicu, Ploiești) or industrial parks (one mound was destroyed in 2005 with the expansion of the Ploiești Industrial Park and construction of a Kaufland warehouse), or even households (Târgșoru Nou).

A mound located in Târgșoru Nou locality was destroyed by the exploitation of mineral aggregates before 2010. Several mounds that are marked on old maps



a



b



c



d

Fig. 3. Destroyed mounds located in Târgşoru Nou (a), Ariceștii-Rahtivani (b), Ploiești (c), and Strejnicu (d)
Fig. 3. Tumului distruși amplasați în localitățile Târgşoru Nou (a), Ariceștii-Rahtivani (b), Ploiești (c) și Strejnicu (d)

have disappeared from the landscape, the arable land looks flat, the contour of the former mounds is not visible anymore (Ariceștii-Rahtivani, Păulești, Târgșoru Nou, Florești, Târgșoru Vechi). On the place of the mound investigated in 2020 in Păulești, on the *Charta Romîniei Meridionale* is marked the presence of ruins of rectangular shape. The existence of a building with basement, the presence of numerous 19th century coins might be related to those ruins. Mound no. 76 from Nedelea, along with the one from Blejoi *Pod*, and two others from Strejnicu and Târgșoru Nou localities, on top of which households were built, could hardly be considered mounds at the moment when they were mapped and their partial destruction was acknowledged. Those sites were visited following the study of old maps on which they were marked. There are also situations when certain buildings only partially destroy the mounds, providing the opportunity of identifying and investigating the main burial, but also some secondary ones. Such examples come from Ariceștii-Rahtivani locality, where the town hall was built on top of a mound, and a house was constructed on top of another mound in 2013 (**Fig. 3/b**). In the cases of Nedelea and Blejoi, even though the mounds were destroyed, we were able to identify and save prehistoric burials, including the primary ones. At Târgșoru Nou, on top of the mound a firing/training ground for soldiers was organised (**Fig. 3/a**), and another mound was cut in the central area by a water canal that was part of the irrigation infrastructure. The same situation was recorded in the case of a mound from Dărmănești locality. In Strejnicu, after checking the oldest images available on Google Earth (2002) it became obvious how the development of some residential areas after this moment led to the destruction of three mounds, out of which two most likely still have the main burials (**Fig. 3/d**).

As for Ploiești city, correlating data obtained during field surveys with the cartographic supports reveals the picture of a disaster (**Fig. 4**) whose course follows the horizontal development of the locality (Debie 1967, map 1; Catană 2012, fig. 17-21). Of the approximately 50 mounds found on maps, no more than 12 have survived in the present landscape, some of which are currently covered by churches, cemeteries, green spaces (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017a, tab. 2, fig. 6, 7; 2019b, fig. 1). For example, on the maps from the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century are marked two mounds in the North neighbourhood, which later disappeared. In the *Mimiu* neighbourhood four mounds are no longer existing, and on top of another one was built the *Sfântul Sava Church*. The only undisturbed mounds are located outside the urban area, outside the city, but there is also an example of a relatively well preserved mound located in the green space along the boulevard that connects the city centre to the South Railway Station (*Gara de Sud)*. Another one was not so lucky, the land is currently leveled and covered by a green space and parking lots.

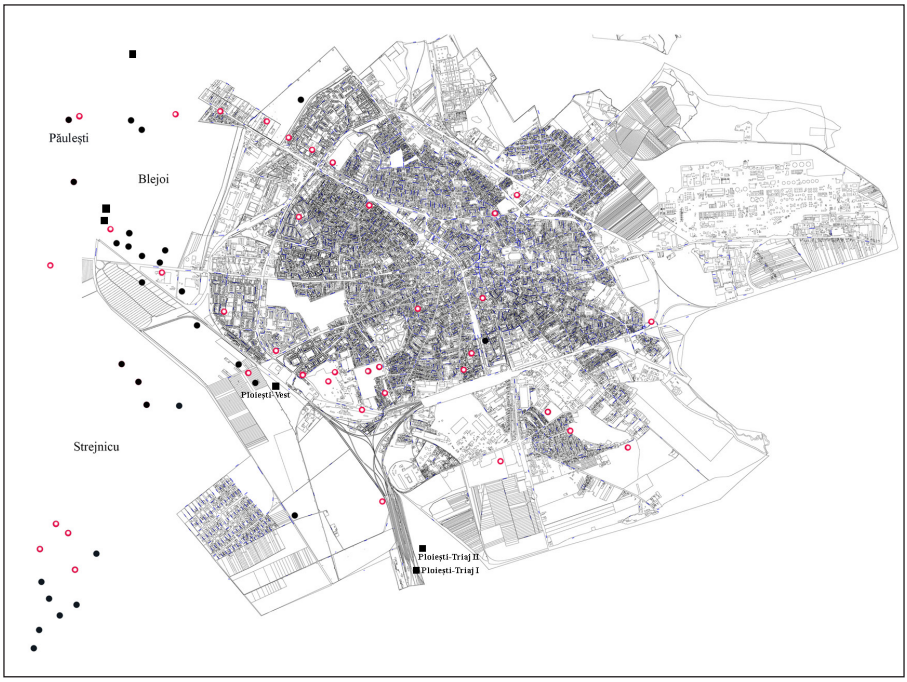


Fig. 4. Present-day ground plan of the city of Ploiești and the limitrophe area with the location of the tumuli (empty circles = destroyed tumuli; full circles = preserved tumuli; squares = researched tumuli) (after Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b)
Fig. 4. Planul actual al orașului Ploiești și al zonei limitrofe cu dispunerea tumulilor (cercuri goale = tumuli distruși; cercuri pline = tumuli conservați; pătrat = tumuli cercetați) (după Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b)

However, this does not mean the rest of the mounds were safe. As already mentioned, one mound was destroyed in 2005 during the construction of a Kaufland logistic centre. The mound is marked on maps, the only evidence left of its existence being the photographs taken by the author (**Fig. 3/c**)[1]. We have to mention that in Ploiești city three mounds were investigated, two of them during World War II (1941-1943). Of these two, the former was partially disturbed by the expansion of the marshalling yard of the city railway station, the archaeological research had the purpose to rescue the archaeological remains (Nestor 1943; 1944; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013; 2015). Several burials were discovered, dating from the end of the 4th millennium BC and the first half of the 3rd millennium BC/Yamnaya (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013; 2015a). Furthermore, other graves were dated at the boundary between the Middle and Late Bronze Age (Frînculeasa 2016, p. 124). A

[1] Several steps were taken in order to report this aggression, however without any results.

third mound containing prehistoric burials, dated to the 4th and 3rd millennia BC was excavated in 2014 (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019b).

On the other hand, a series of fixed signs, such as topographic reference points, boundary stones, but also the toponymic memory, led to the preservation of mounds, either in their original shape or only partially. Thus, in the flat plain landscape these mounds are visible marks, therefore in many cases on top of them were placed topographic reference points that protected them, preserving their elevation from the moment when the pillars were installed, or allowing the observation of the degree of destruction or natural or anthropogenic change[2]. In Ploiești and its surroundings, the existence of mounds (which are currently not visible in the landscape, but are marked on the studied maps) persists through toponyms such as *strada Măgurii*, *spitalul Movila*, *Movila Spânzuraților* on top of which there is the *Sfântul Vasile* Church (Debie 1967, pl. II), *Movila cu Troiță*, *Movila Vulpii*, whose toponym is nowadays transferred to one of the three mounds placed approximately 300 m away from the initial location. Initially located east of Rudu (Sava-Petrescu 1937, map 1), subsequently in Ploiești city, on the Rudului street, there is the *Movila lui Blană* (Zagoritz 1914, p. 3), which is still visible in the *Eroilor Cemetery* (Rudului Cemetery), and on top of which there is a bell tower along with Christian burials (**Fig. 5/b**).

On the estate plans (*moșii*) such mounds are marked because they were used as visible landmarks to delimit the boundaries or they had suggestive toponyms that helped to identify more easily those areas (ex. *Movila cu cruce* - Nedelea or *Movila cu troiță* - Nedelea). When there were no actual mounds, earthen knolls similar to mounds were built in order to mark/delimit the perimeter, but these were much smaller and different from the funerary monuments. Nowadays these knolls are still visible due to the presence of scrub vegetation.

A special situation is that of existing natural ridges in the landscape, rather elongated and slightly elevated at the ends. When viewed from three sides they often give the impression of mounds. At least 10 such possible mounds were mapped. Two questions arise here: are these actual mounds or are they remodeled ridges used for secondary burials? Can we treat all these possible mounds as actual funerary monuments, given that this has an impact on the status of these areas that might not be archaeological sites in the end? In our experience there are two situations. One of the situations was found in 2011 in Mound I from Păulești, a

[2] See the above mentioned research from Blejoi (Frînculeasa et alii 2019a, p. 37). After 1990 the topographic reference points were abandoned, many of them were put out of use, the metal structure was stolen, which weakened the chances of the mounds to be protected. In addition, the ploughing level around these concrete pillars, which are now elevated, shows the degree and rhythm of destruction/flattening of the mounds.



Fig. 5. Ploiești: mounds under the Sfântul Vasile Church (a), Eroilor Cemetery (b), and Sfântul Sava Church (c)
Fig. 5. Ploiești: movile suprapuse de Biserica Sfântu Vasile (a), Cimitirul Eroilor (b) și Biserica Sfântul Sava (c)

mound which was built at the end of an alluvial ridge which was remodeled to look like a mound. Two burials were discovered, but also a layer that seemed to be a mantle (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2013; 2015, fig. 4; pl. 10/1). There are also situations in which these elevations were not treated as mounds, such as the already mentioned ones from Târgșoru Vechi or Nedelea, however in both cases the anthropogenic interventions might have destroyed the possible (secondary) graves.

There are also positive examples such as the ones of the mounds investigated in 2019 in Nedelea (**Pl. 4-5**) and Târgșoru Nou (**Pl. 6-7**), but also another one excavated in Ariceștii-Rahtivani in 2015. In this last mentioned case, after several episodes in which we succeeded to save the mound firstly from being swallowed by a large soil/land deposit, and secondly from being covered by the headquarters/buildings of a private company, we finally managed to conduct preventive archaeological research in 2015 (**Pl. 14**). Two prehistoric burials were discovered, the primary one had a gravel ring around it and grave goods such as a spectacle-shaped pendant, copper tubes, or beads made of *Spondillus* shells (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2016). The *Movila Crăciuneasca* from Boldești, investigated in 2019, was also saved from destruction thanks to the initial intervention of local authorities[3].

[3] Research conducted within the framework of the project The Yamnaya Impact on Prehistoric Europe.

Conclusions

Research conducted in Prahova County has contributed to a better knowledge and understanding of time periods little known in this area before, especially the existence of a peculiar episode dated to the end of the 4th millennium BC, characterised by burials with spectacular grave goods, beyond the well-known austerity of Yamnaya burials (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2015; Preda-Bălănică *et alii* 2020), with connections to the intra-Carpathian region (Frînculeasa 2020a). Recently, in Târgșoru Nou a Cernavoda II settlement was found under a Yamnaya kurgan, a stratigraphic situation also known from Smeeni, Buzău County (Simache, Teodorescu 1962; Frînculeasa *et alii* 2017b). This mound serves as a relevant case study for establishing a chronological relationship between the two archaeological cultural complexes, but also provides information regarding the interactions between local communities and the steppe world (Frînculeasa 2020a; 2020b). We also have access to a significant amount of new archaeological data regarding the nomadic Turkic world of the beginning of the second millennium AD (Frînculeasa *et alii* 2012; 2018; 2020).

Burial mounds appeared as a result of social changes happening at the end of the Eneolithic, the reshaping of societies on different foundations, the birth of elites, others than the ones dominating the previous period. These monuments are still important in the study of both local peculiarities as well as phenomena that turned out to become transcontinental ones. We think about these mounds as unaltered, solitary mounds, coloured in green, yellow or red, landmarks used in the past, symbols of messages awaiting decipherment. The current situation of these funerary monuments is very nuanced, difficult to solve with ideal life-saving solutions. On the one hand, in the case of investments or civil constructions, the existing laws allow archaeologists to rescue them. However, successive ploughing inevitably leads to flattening, destruction of secondary graves, which are the most vulnerable and the first ones to vanish, and in the end to the depersonalisation of mounds in their natural landscape and demolition of their majesty/monumentality. One can map them, mark them, but one cannot preserve their monument status. We are the passive witnesses of their destruction, after standing tall for millennia they will disappear in only a couple of generations. In the end, all we will be left with will be flat isolated burials in the steppe. The solutions adopted in Hungary (Rákóczi, Tóth 2017; Rákóczi 2018) seem almost extreme, revolutionary measures in Romania. However, revolutions are episodes of discontinuity in which one of the main rules is the destruction/abandonment of good things of the past followed by a reevaluation of the same fund and setting it on new coordinates, to fit the ideology of the time. If mounds would have been of service to the ideologies of the last century (democratic and/or communist) these monuments would have

probably had a better fate. Paradoxically, although mounds are the vestiges of an expansive ideology, they could not adjust to times dominated by ideologies. The written record of these situations becomes a witness of particular times, but also of facts/actions beyond the official frameworks and passing ideologies of more or less stable times.

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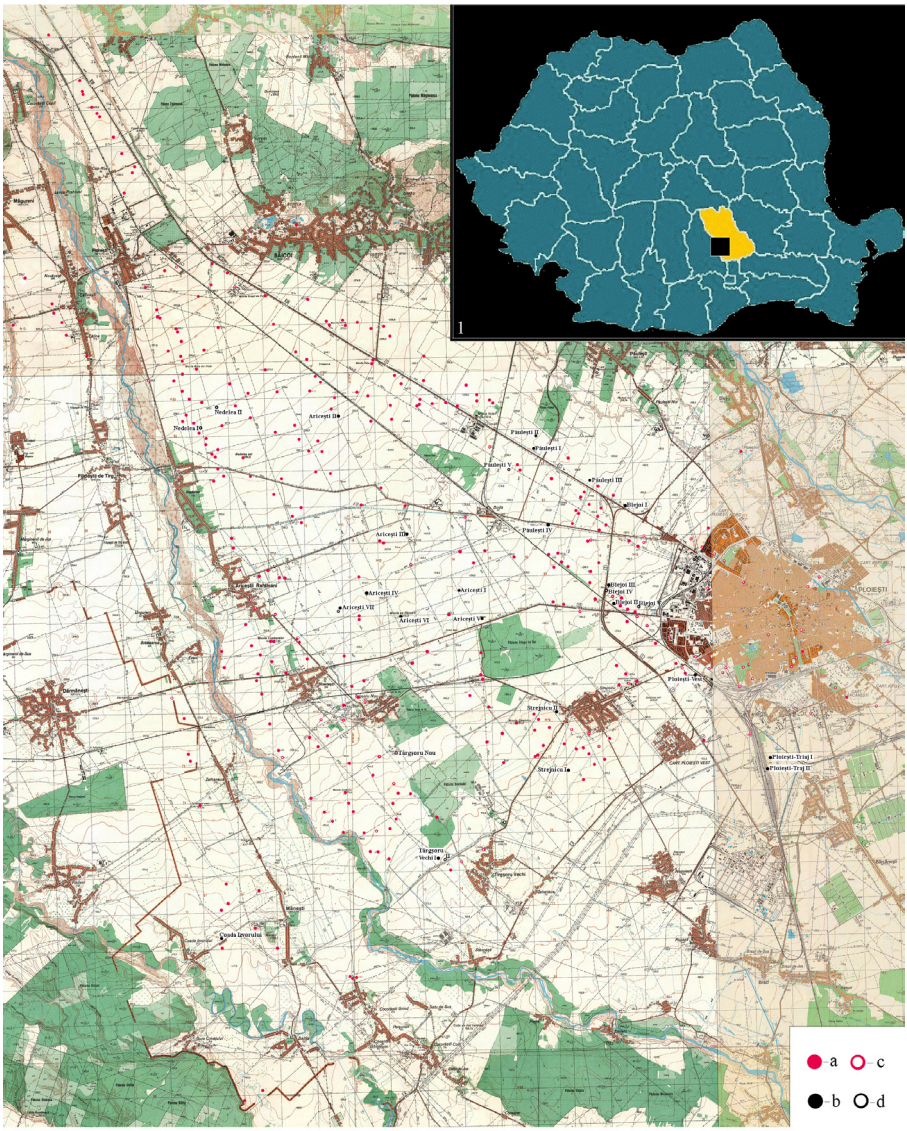
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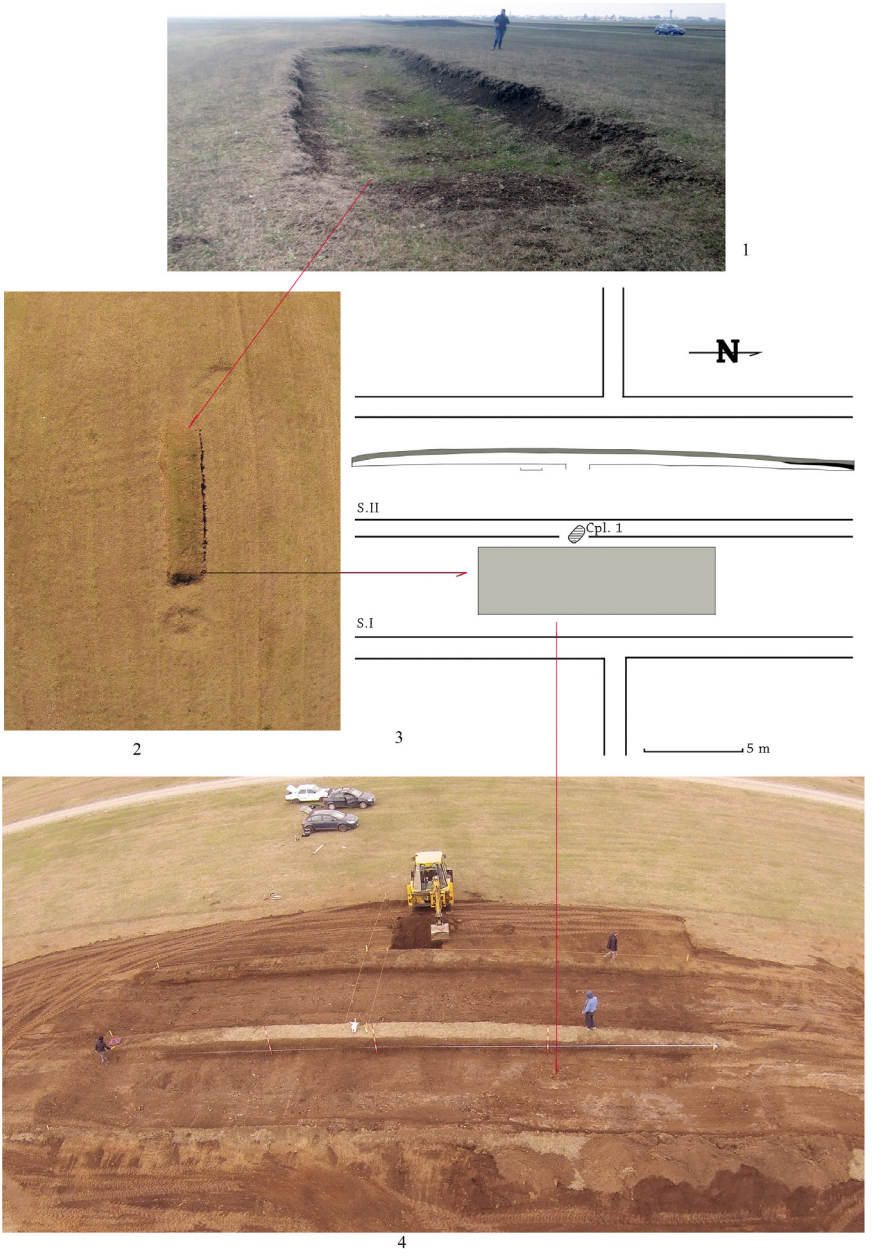
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Pl. 1. Prahova County (1) and detail of the *Prahova area* (2): mapped mounds (a), excavated mounds (b), destroyed mounds (c), and excavated destroyed mounds (d)
Pl. 1. Județul Prahova (1) cu detaliu *arealul Prahova* (2): tumuli cartați (a), tumuli cercetați (b), tumuli distruși (c) și tumuli distruși cercetați (d)



Pl. 2. Nedelea, mound I: the trench excavated prior to archaeological excavations (1-2); plan of the excavations and stratigraphic profile (3); aerial photograph taken during excavation (4) (photo credit: Octav Negrea)

Pl. 2. Nedelea, tumul I: șanțul excavat anterior cercetărilor arheologice (1-2); planul săpăturilor și profilul stratigrafic (3); imagine aeriană din timpul cercetărilor (4) (fotografii Octav Negrea)



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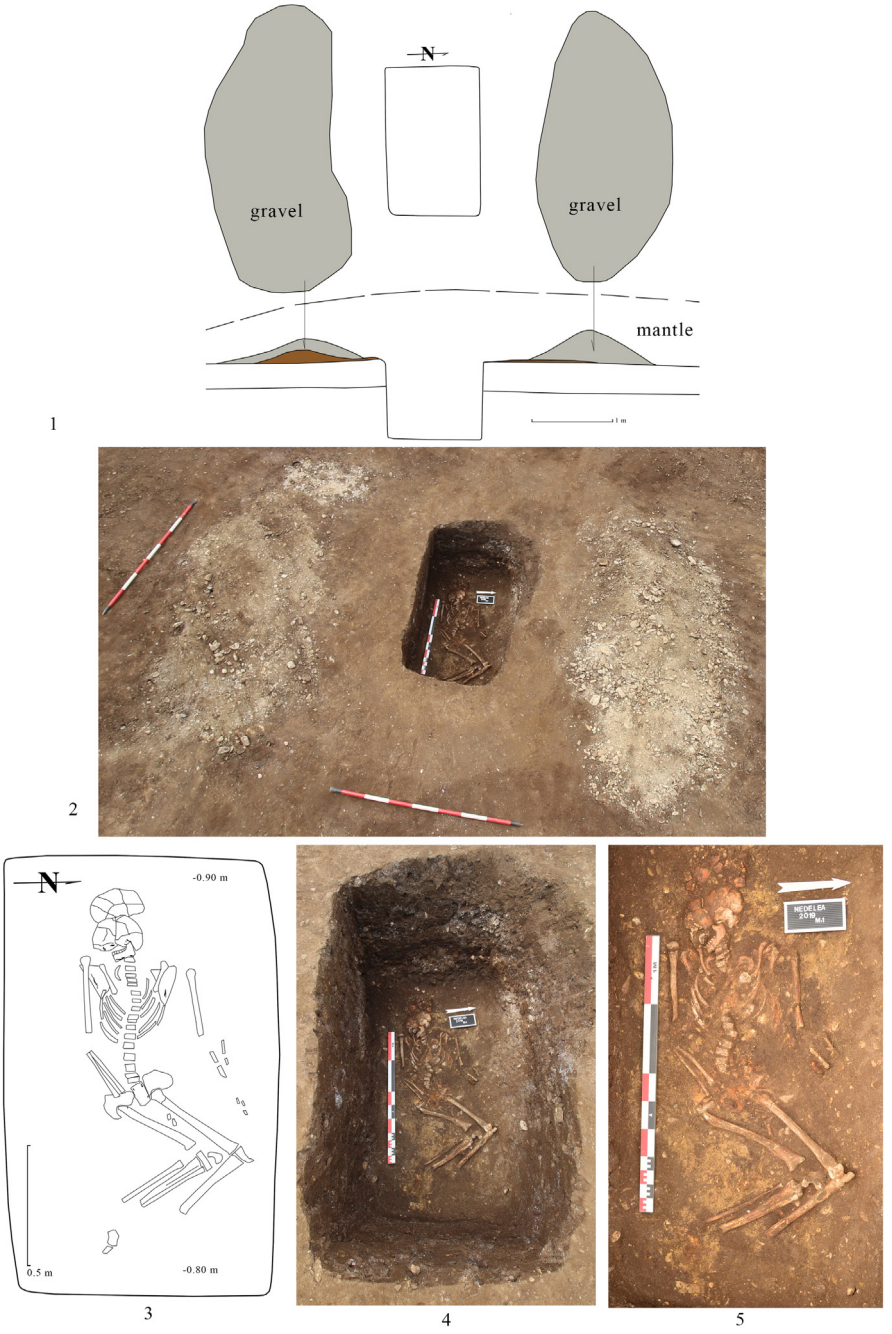


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Pl. 3. Nedelea, mound II: images of the mound from 2015 (1, 2) and 2019 (3)
Pl. 3. Nedelea, tumul II: imagini cu tumulul din anii 2015 (1, 2) şi 2019 (3)



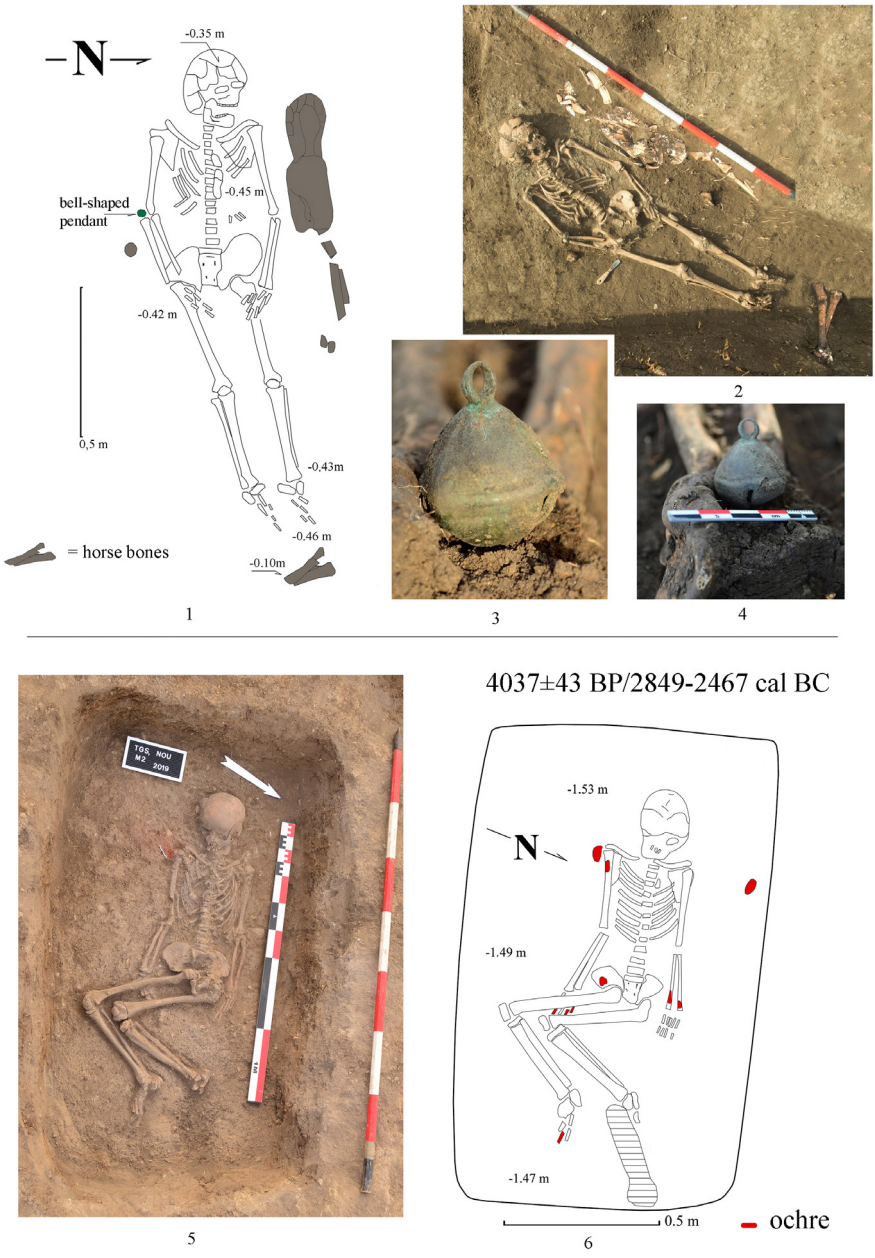
Pl. 4. Nedelea, mound II: aerial photographs taken during excavations (photo credit: Octav Negrea)
Pl. 4. Nedelea, tumul II: imagini aeriene din timpul săpăturilor arheologice (fotografii Octav Negrea)



Pl. 5. Nedelea, mound II: plan of grave 1 and stratigraphic profile (1, 3); grave 1 (2, 4-5)
Pl. 5. Nedelea, tumul II: planul mormântul 1 cu profilul stratigrafic (1, 3); mormântul 1 (2, 4-5)



Pl. 6. Târgşoru Nou, the mound: view from the south (1), north (3), and from above (2); detail of the destroyed area (the arrows indicate the outline of the mound) (2, 4); the plan of the mound and the position of the investigated features (5)
Pl. 6. Târgșoru Nou, tumulul văzut dinspre sud (1), nord (3) și de sus (2); detaliu cu zona distrusă (săgețile indică conturul movilei) (2, 4); planul movilei cu amplasamenul complexelor cercetate (5)



Pl. 7. Târgşoru Nou: grave 1 (1-2) and the bell-shaped pendant (3-4); grave 2 (5-6)
Pl. 7. Târgşoru Nou: mormântul 1 (1-2) și clopoțelul din bronz descoperit în acesta (3-4); mormântul 2 (5-6)



Pl. 8. Târgșoru Nou: Cernavoda II pottery found in feature 1
Pl. 8. Târgșoru Nou: ceramică Cernavoda II descoperită în complexul 1

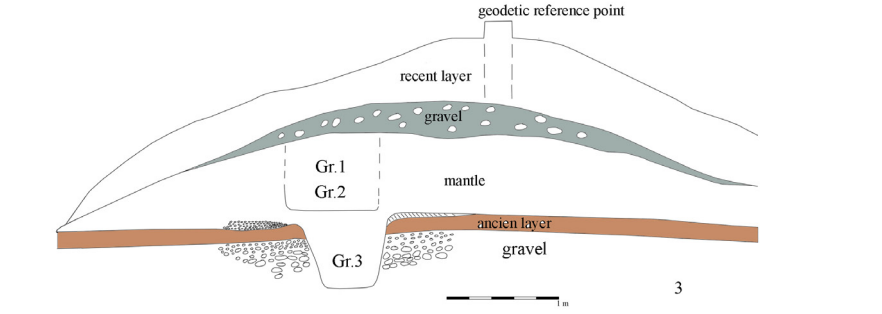


Pl. 9. Târgşoru Vechi, mound II: aerial photographs taken during excavation (1-2); post-prehistoric archaeological features that destroyed the mound (3-6) (photo credit: Octav Negrea, Bianca Preda)

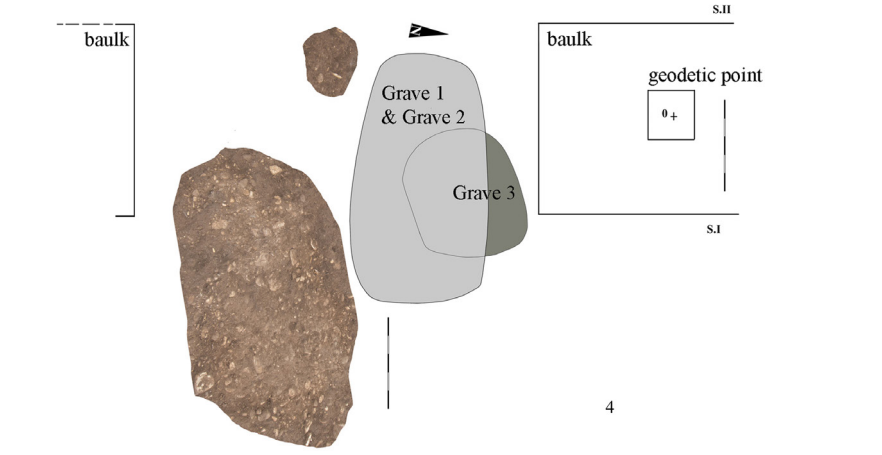
Pl. 9. Târgşoru Vechi, tumul II: imagini aeriene din timpul cercetărilor (1-2); complexe arheologice post-preistorice care au distrus movila (3-6) (fotografii Octav Negrea, Bianca Preda)



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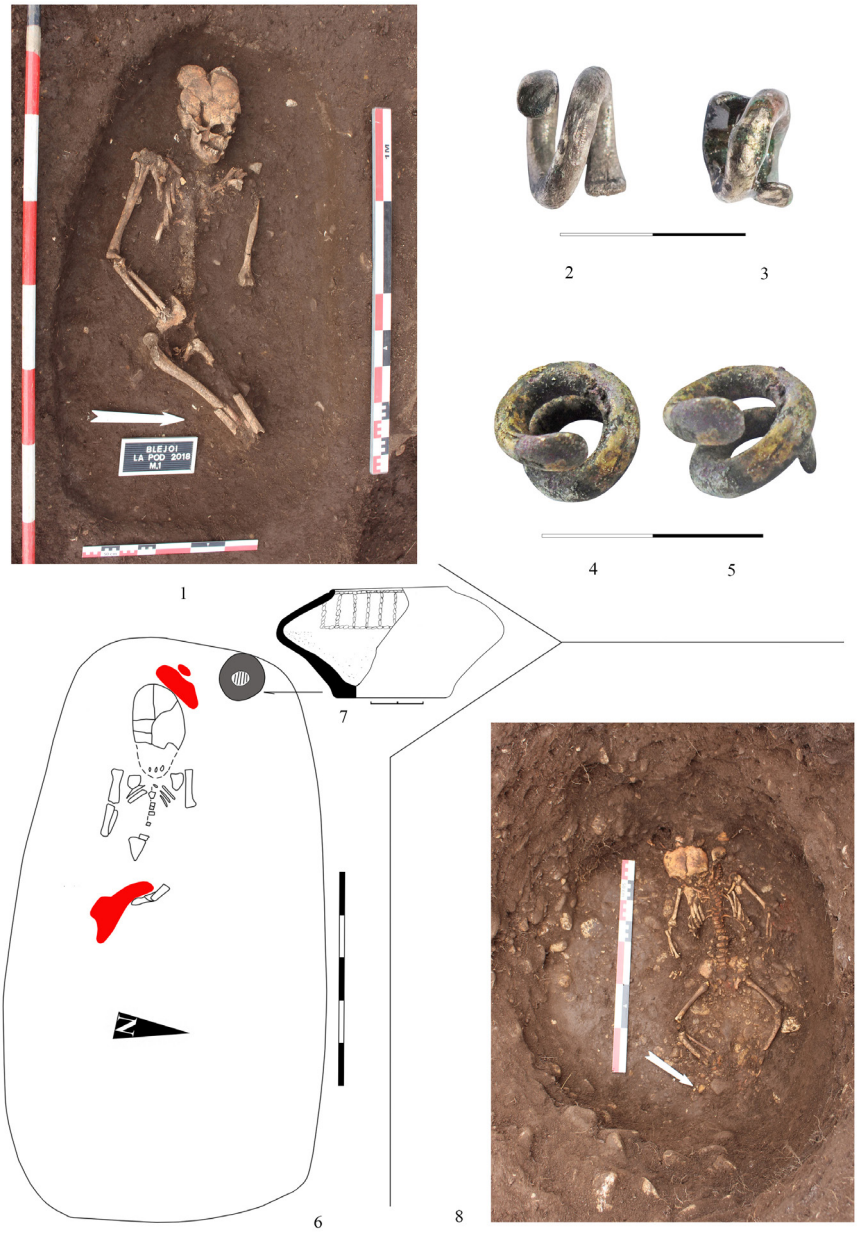


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Pl. 10. Blejoi, mound IV (1): detail of the preserved area of the mound (2) and the stratigraphic profile (3); detail of the investigated funerary features (4)
Pl. 10. Blejoi, tumul IV (1): detaliu cu zona păstrată din movilă (2) și profilul stratigrafic al acesteia (3); detaliu cu planul complexelor funerare cercetate (4)



Pl. 11. Blejoi, mound IV: grave 1 (1) and hair rings (4-5); grave 2 (6) and the pot with cord decoration (7); grave 3 (8)
Pl. 11. Blejoi, tumul IV: mormântul 1 (1) și inelele de buclă descoperite în acesta (4-5); mormântul 2 (6) și vasul decorat cu șnurul descoperit (7); mormântul 3 (8)



Pl. 12. Blejoi, mound V: photos of the mound (1); aerial photographs of the route of the military trench (3-4) and other constructions of the military facility (2) (after Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a)

Pl. 12. Blejoi, tumul V: imagini cu tumulul (1); imagini aeriene cu traseul tranșeei militare (3-4) și alte facilități ale instalației militare (2) (după Frînculeasa *et alii* 2019a)



Pl. 13. Păulești, mound V (T.11): the investigated area marked on *Charta României Meridionale* (1); aerial photographs taken during research (2-4) and the pit that destroyed the centre of the mound (4)

Pl. 13. Păulești, tumul V (T.11): *Charta României Meridionale* cu zona cercetată (1); imagini aeriene din timpul cercetărilor (2-4) cu groapa care a distrus centrul movilei (4)



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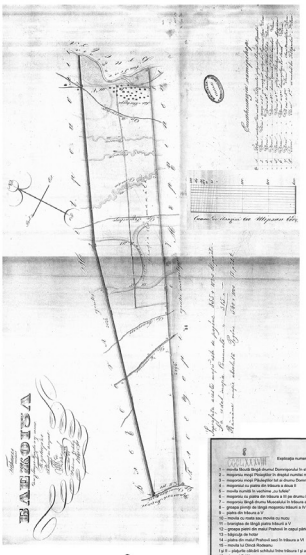
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Pl. 14. Ariceștii-Rahtivani, mound V: the landfill that partially covered the mound (photos taken in 2008) (1-2); aerial photograph taken during archaeological research (3); the primary burial (Gr. 2)

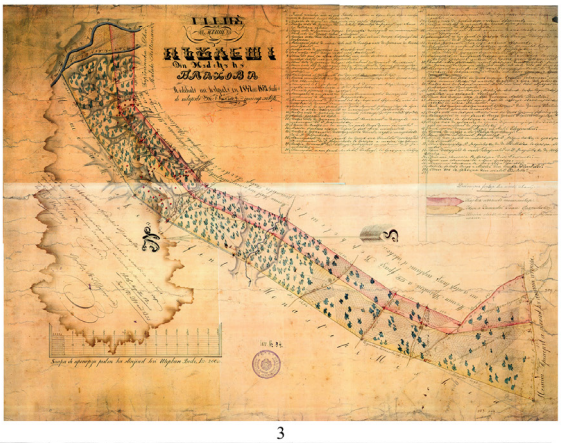
Pl. 14. Ariceștii-Rahtivani, tumul V: depozitul de pământ și gunoi care acoperise parțial movila (fotografii 2008) (1-2); imagine aeriană din timpul săpăturilor arheologice (3); mormântul primar descoperit (M. 2)



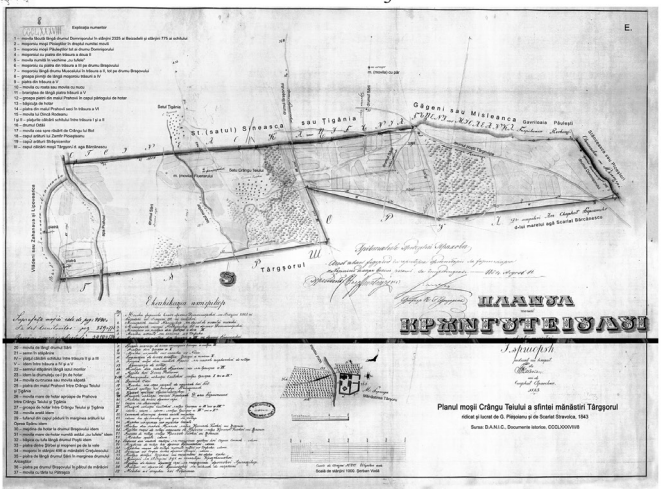
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Pl. 15. 19th century estate plans on which mounds are marked: Ariceştii-Rahtivani (1), Blejoi (2), Păulești (3) and Târgşoru Vechi (4)
Pl. 15. Planuri de moşii din secolul XIX pe care apar marcate movile: Ariceştii-Rahtivani (1), Blejoi (2), Păulești (3) şi TârgşoruVechi (4)