

# BURIAL CUSTOMS IN THE 10th–11th CENTURIES IN TRANSYLVANIA, CRIȘANA AND BANAT\*

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*To Dr. Radu Harhoiu for his 60th birthday*

The examination of burial customs in the 10th–11th centuries in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat has almost no tradition. Beside the works of Gyula László written during World War II (in which he could only examine the phenomena of the Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street cemetery),<sup>1</sup> no one has dealt with burial customs extensively. The Hungarian scientific literature slowly lost interest in the problem of the Transylvanian conquest,<sup>2</sup> and consequently no one treated burial customs to any great depth.<sup>3</sup> Romanian archaeology has pursued two goals: to prove the Daco-Romanic continuity<sup>4</sup> and the existence of the Romanian, pre-Hungarian knezates in Transylvania, Banat and Crișana.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the presentation and the analysis of burial customs in the 10th–11th centuries in Transylvania, Banat and Crișana have not been the subject of any study to date.

## THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BURIALS

The most important elements in defining and analysing the cultural horizon of the 10th–11th centuries in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat are the burial customs. The burial customs are first the emotional reaction of relatives, members of family at the time of death. The most important condition of its manifestation is the economic status of the community, the family and the individual. It can be clearly seen in the quantity and quality of ritual sacrifices, weapons and dress accessories deposited in the grave. Naturally, the quantity and quality depend largely on the political-economic status of the specific region as well as on the importance of the economic roads passing through that region, all which are clearly manifested in the graves.

We will analyse these phenomena in a territory referred to by these names: Transylvania, Banat and Crișana. Our purpose is to compare the burial customs of these well individuated regions. The latter two show very similar elements in the 10th–11th centuries, contrasted with Transylvania, which, as we will see, possesses markedly different burial features and elements. We might say that in this period in Transylvania the different burial customs co-existed, which emphasises the multicultural character of this region.

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<sup>1</sup> László, 1942. 578–584.; László, 1943; László, 1944; László, 1945, 3–15.

<sup>2</sup> We have to mention one exception: István Bóna. He was the only one who in the last years of the Kádár regime presented in an excellent analysis the relics of the Hungarian Conquerors in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat. Bóna, 1986, 194–237.

<sup>3</sup> Tettamanti S. mentions a few sites, but her catalogue does not include all the sites known at that time. Tettamanti, 1975, 79–123.

<sup>4</sup> We can read the best critique about this view by L. Boia, a university professor in Bucarest: Boia, 1997, 97; Boia, 1998.

<sup>5</sup> The great castle excavations illustrate the political uses of archaeology. The critique of this situation was published in 1991 by Popa, 1991, 153–188.

### 1. 1. Burial rite

As a first feature of the burial customs we should mention that in the 10th–11th centuries only **inhumation burials** are known in the studied region. The cremation rite known in previous centuries probably disappeared in the 9th century, or at least it cannot be demonstrated that it did not. We can also say that the burial rites had become simple by this period; nevertheless we can infer a lot regarding the cultural connections and traditions of the above-mentioned period; even about the political reality.

### 1. 2. The problem of the social status (map 1)

Unfortunately, only of a part of the finds in 10th–11th centuries are relevant for our research goals. There are 142 sites, but we have adequate information only about 35 of them, and only in few cases of partially excavated cemeteries an analysis was possible, so results should be treated with caution. (We have information about funerary rite from 62 sites.) Fully excavated cemeteries are only the sites of Sălacea and Timișoara–Dumbrăvița. The rest of the cemeteries were only partly excavated. We also have some information about 26 sites but, unfortunately, the finds found in other sites cannot provide any important information as far as the burial customs are concerned, because they are stray finds.

Figure 1

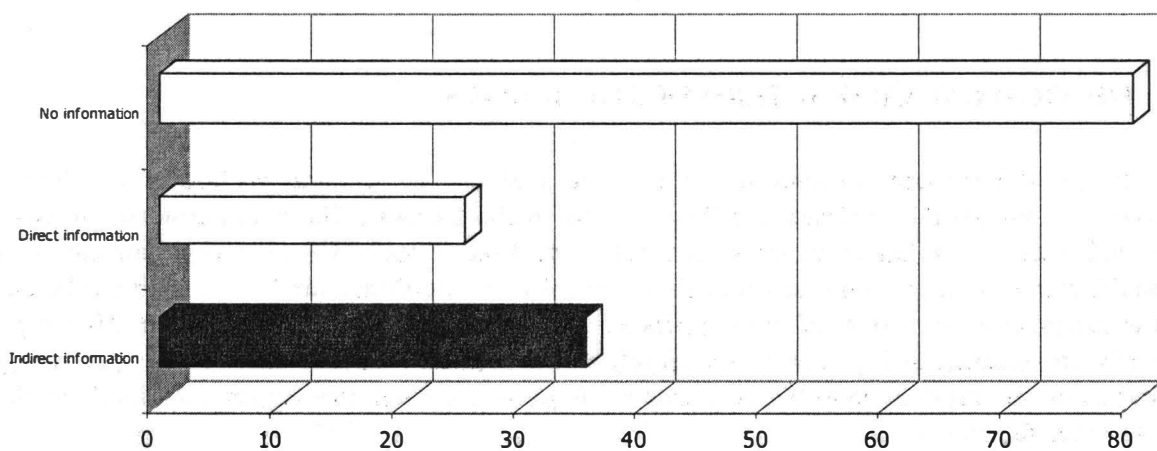
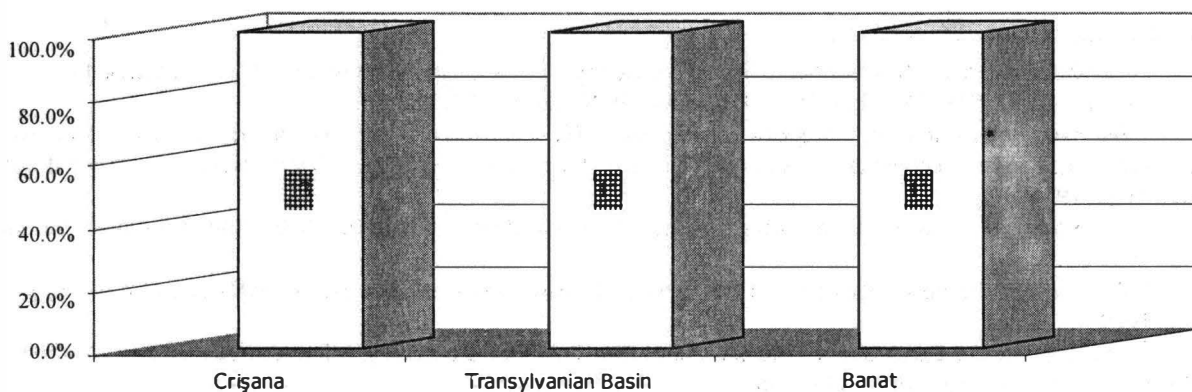


Figure 2: The 35 sites, which provide direct data, are divided by regions as follows:



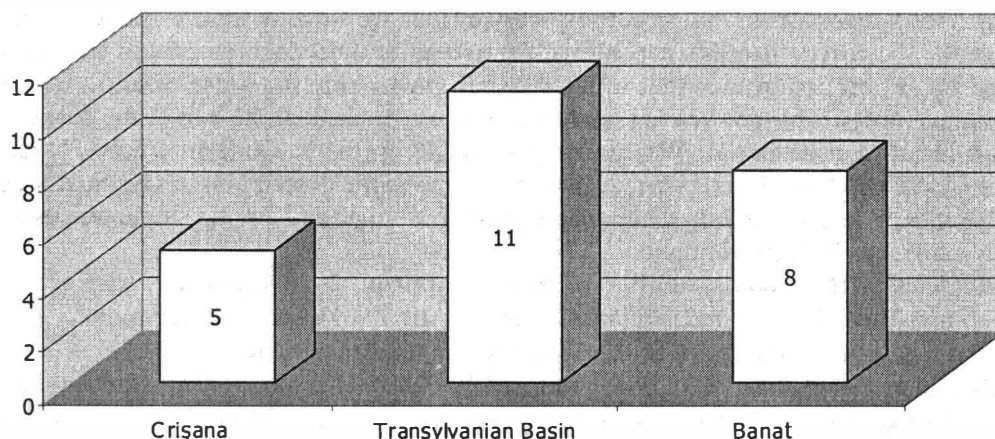


Figure 3

The same situation holds for sites about which we have little information. There was more research conducted in Transylvania mainly in the '90s, in some cases due to excavations necessitated by investments.<sup>6</sup>

### 1. 3. The structure of cemeteries, types of funerals (map 2; pl. 4; pl. 6–7; pl. 15; pl. 19; pl. 24; pl. 27; pl. 32)

Since the book of B. Szőke, published in 1962, there is a tendency in Hungarian archaeology to “sociologize”<sup>7</sup> the cemeteries, to classify people found in graves into social strata, usually in upper-, middle- and lower-status groups. The separation of the groups is problematic though. For instance: how should we interpret the cemetery of Alba Iulia Stația de Salvare? The grave number obviously indicates that it belongs to middle-status cemeteries, although the rich finds (e.g., golden hair rings, earrings and horses, etc.) suggest otherwise. There may well have been quite a lot of graves without furnishings as well, but it seems unlikely that there was not any differentiation between the people found in them, in other words, that everybody would have belonged to the lower-status group. Another good example might be the group of horse-weapon burials, which could be the graves of conquerors of the 10th century.<sup>8</sup> Comparing it with the cemeteries in Șiclăui, Cluj-Napoca, Biharea, etc., it does not seem to be poorer at all than those which are considered to be cemeteries of the middle-status group. Then how can we classify cemeteries?

We can examine the question from other standpoint as well: from the small Timișoara-Dumbrăvița cemetery three graves are known (a *maturus* man, a woman and a child), one without grave goods, the other two with two hair rings and a small knife. We can hardly think that the members of the upper-status group rested in these poor graves.

We feel that we cannot follow Szőke's theory in our analysis.<sup>9</sup> In order to avoid the dangers of social classification we will classify the cemeteries according to their dimensions.

1. To the group of **single graves** belong two graves at Alba Iulia (the Roman Catholic Cathedral, on the south-west side of Alba Iulia–Cetate) and one at Sânpetru German (premises of the G.A.S.).<sup>10</sup> In the case of Alba Iulia more graves could be found between the two graves, which are 50 meters apart.

<sup>6</sup> For more details, see Gáll, 2005 for the research on the cemeteries from Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street and Izvorul Împăratului. Lit. Gáll, 2005 (ms.).

<sup>7</sup> Szőke, 1962.

<sup>8</sup> It is also probable that they were simply mercenaries. The best example is the Hungarian horse burial of Bálint II type from Platonești at the Lower Danube, an unpublished cemetery.

<sup>9</sup> We have already made this mistake, when trying to classify this way the sites from the period of the Hungarian Conquest in Transylvania. Gáll, 2001, 1–13.

<sup>10</sup> E. Dörner unambiguously states that he looked for other graves using tiral trenches. No other grave was found. Dörner, 1970, 457, 12. picture.

Among these three graves, it is almost entirely certain that we have a female burial in the grave at Sânpetru German; the rosette harness, earring with cast-bead row pendant, the pearls and the small-size stirrups suggest it. From one of the Alba Iulia cathedral graves only the horse offering was excavated. For the other grave, the sex of the skeleton is not known, but, because of the belt or the harness fitting, it can be considered as a male burial. We can suspect single graves in Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare–VI mound and at Comloșu Mare–Posztzszállás, at least according to the description of Gy. N. Kisléghy.<sup>11</sup> The graves in Biharea–Fortress and Sfântu Gheorghe–Epreșetető were placed among single graves as well, but we do not have any convincing information<sup>12</sup>.

**2. Cemeteries with a small number of graves (approx. 2–10 graves)** Arad–Ceala,<sup>13</sup> Nădlac–Temető,<sup>14</sup> Salonta–Testhalom,<sup>15</sup> Dudeștii Vechi–mounds II, III, IV, V,<sup>16</sup> Dumbrăvița<sup>17</sup>. It should be emphasised that this type of cemeteries are also known from the Hungarian Plain.

**3. Middle-size cemeteries:** Biharea–Șumuleu,<sup>18</sup> Nădlac,<sup>19</sup> -Castle-2,<sup>20</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street,<sup>21</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street,<sup>22</sup> Moftinu Mic–Messzelátó hill,<sup>23</sup> Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș<sup>24</sup>, Blandiana “B” cemetery<sup>25</sup>, Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound<sup>26</sup>, Șeitin–Homokdomb<sup>27</sup>, Sălacea–Vidahegy<sup>28</sup>, Șiclău–Gropoiaie<sup>29</sup>, Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor<sup>30</sup>, Voiteni<sup>31</sup>, Zalău–Palvar.<sup>32</sup>

**4. Cemeteries with a high number of graves:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street,<sup>33</sup> Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare,<sup>34</sup> Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street,<sup>35</sup> Vărșand–Laposhalom,<sup>36</sup> Hodoni–Pocioroane,<sup>37</sup> Pecica,<sup>38</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>12</sup> Horedt, 1968, 422–428; Székely, 1945, 3–15.

<sup>13</sup> In the basis of Dörmer's description, we might think of a small cemetery.

<sup>14</sup> During our field survey we discovered that it was placed on a mound of about 50 metres in diameter. The finds salvaged by Pavel Husaric, a history teacher in Nădlac. The mound was used by gipsies to extract clay and they reported the graves to Husaric. The group consisted of 3 graves.

<sup>15</sup> Two graves are known. Information graciously provided by A. Lakatos who thinks further graves might be hidden in the ground.

<sup>16</sup> We put into this group the mounds II–IV, following the description of Kisléghy. Mound V is included because among the his finds, now in the archaeological collections of Muzeul Banatului, we were able to find grave furnishings.

<sup>17</sup> By courtesy of Daniela Tănase we know that the site is fully recovered.

<sup>18</sup> Karácsonyi, 1903, 66–67, 405–412.

<sup>19</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>20</sup> Dumitrașcu, 1994, 85–90.

<sup>21</sup> In Hica Câmpeanu's opinion, only a part of the cemetery could be recovered.

<sup>22</sup> In Gy. László's opinion, the cemetery had 36 graves.

<sup>23</sup> According to the excavator, a part of the cemetery could be excavated. Unpublished.

<sup>24</sup> Information in courtesy of A. Lakatos.

<sup>25</sup> Only a part of the cemetery was recovered.

<sup>26</sup> 20 graves were destroyed and only 4 were recovered. The distance between them makes us conclude that there can be more graves there.

<sup>27</sup> Beside the four recovered graves, there are some destroyed ones.

<sup>28</sup> 12 graves are known, but before the excavations, several graves had been destroyed.

<sup>29</sup> Dörmer recovered 12 graves. 7 or 8 graves were destroyed before the excavation started.

<sup>30</sup> So far, 42 graves have been recovered. But in I.M. Țiplic's opinion we might think of a cemetery with 70 graves, because they have reached the end of western and northern part of the cemetery.

<sup>31</sup> During the excavation, seven graves were recovered from a 2 metre large and 20 metre long trial trench. We could conclude that the find must have been much larger.

<sup>32</sup> According to Băcuet, S. – Băcuet Crișan D. the cemetery may contain about 100 graves.

<sup>33</sup> Drâmbăreanu, Rodean, Gligor, Moga, Anghel, 1998, 187–210.; Dragotă, Brânda, 2000, 294.

<sup>34</sup> Approx. 1300 graves.

<sup>35</sup> 186 graves were recovered.

<sup>36</sup> At the end of 19th c. and at beginning of 20th c., many graves were destroyed. After World War I.D. Popescu discovered 58 graves in a trench and in a half trench at right angles to the first one.

<sup>37</sup> According to the excavators, the site lies on a 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> area. The discovered graves origin from different places as well.

<sup>38</sup> We could infer it from the quantity of the finds.

Nădlac–Pompa de apă,<sup>39</sup> Oradea–In vii,<sup>40</sup> Vladimirescu,<sup>41</sup> Zimandu Nou,<sup>42</sup> Șirioara–Podirei,<sup>43</sup> Timișoara–Cioreni,<sup>44</sup> Zalău–Ortelec,<sup>45</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy,<sup>46</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Gábor's garden.<sup>47</sup>

**Unclassified for lack of sufficient information:** Deva, Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului, Alba Iulia–Pâclișa, Cluj–Napoca–Farkas Street 23, Semenice Street, Blandiana–“C”, Gâmbaș, Măscă, Tomnatic–Kishalom and the Brick Factory, Teremia Mare, Oradea–Cazarma Husarilor, Uivar, Șirioara–Balta Jătei.

As we could observe, single burials and cemeteries with fewer graves consist of horse and weapon burials (with the only exception: Dumbrăvița). Such burials are quite frequent in most middle-sized cemeteries (Cluj–Napoca–Pata Street, Cluj–Napoca–Zăpolya Street, Târian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș, Blandiana “B” cemetery, Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound, Șeitin–Homokdomb, Șiclău–Gropoiaie, Orăștie, Voiteni. Nevertheless, there are some cemeteries where horse and weapon burials do not occur at all (Sălacea–Vidahegy, Zalău–Palvar).

In the big cemeteries the finds indicate that during the 11th century horse and weapon burials are unrepresented. This dating, however, may not be valid for all the cemeteries. For example in the Stația de Salvare cemetery, horse and weapon burial is known (which will be discussed later). At the same time, according to the excavator, an S-shaped hair ring was found only in one grave from the first phase of the cemetery (grave 794 excavated by H. Ciugudeanu, which makes it probable that in this phase the cemetery was already in use in 10th century).

We know weaponless horse burials in the 11th century only from Hodoni–Pocioroane. A symbolic horse burial with trapezoid pear-shaped stirrup with handle and with a foal bit was found in grave 3 (male *maturus* II). Adjacent to it were 2 female graves (*maturus* and 22 year old *adultus*), each with an obolus of Stephen (István) I. It is almost certain on the ground of these coins that grave 3 (together with graves 2 and 4) is a horse burial from the 11th century; which is not surprising, because we know that Banat under of rule of Ajtony (*i.e.*, in the first part of 11th century) remained half-pagan. When we mentioned the difference between the regions, we were referring specifically to this political reality.

So it can be stated finally that these cemetery types do have some ritual common features (mainly with regard to grave furnishings); however, certain cemeteries, about which we will speak later, are markedly different from each other.

#### ***I. 4. The topography of the cemeteries (map 3; pl. 5; pl. 16.; pl. 18; pl. 28; pl. 31)***

Always and everywhere, the choice of burial site depended on the configuration of the terrain and the hydrographical situation. These sites are often situated in relatively high places, not far from water courses.<sup>48</sup> The mounds mentioned by Gy. N. Kisléghy were probably prehistoric settlement mounds, used

<sup>39</sup> On the basis M. Rusu's notes, the length of the cemetery is at least 100 meters.

<sup>40</sup> In the cemetery, graves were revealed in different periods. Graves from the 10th and 11th centuries based on coins of I. András.

<sup>41</sup> In the cemetery of civis, 242 graves have been discovered to date.

<sup>42</sup> From the great quantity of hair rings in the Hungarian National Museum it may be concluded that a large-sized cemetery was destroyed here in the 19th century.

<sup>43</sup> 76 graves of cemetery dated inaccurately to the 11th–12th c., which in fact came into existence in the 10th–11th c. Only a part of it was recovered.

<sup>44</sup> According to A. Rădulescu, the excavator, the cemetery is much larger. A good example for it, is that so far only one row of graves could be revealed, the result is 20 burials. We can add to it the 12 wrong-excavated [poorly excavated?] graves, the graves not documented by us and the graves destroyed by machines. Therefore, we think that maybe there were about 40 graves in the Cioreni cemetery.

<sup>45</sup> Graves belonging to civis[?]: From the 1983 excavation, 31 recovered graves and 25 skulls are known. At the time of 2001 excavation, 10 graves were found.

<sup>46</sup> At least 75 graves from the cemetery of the castle-dwelling population. Based on the cemetery map the cemetery must have been much larger.

<sup>47</sup> 57 graves from the cemetery of the castle-dwelling population. The cemetery map indicates that the cemetery must have been much larger.

<sup>48</sup> Best exemplified by Comloșu Mare–Posztzszállás, Nădlac, Voiteni, Timișoara–Cioreni, etc.

by our ancestors to bury their dead. Based on the available data and on our surveys we differentiate six groups. In some cases, a new field survey would be necessary because the available data are not clear enough.

## THE SIX GROUPS ARE CHARACTERIZED BY THEIR POSITION:

**1. On the top of a hill/mountain:** Alba Iulia–Roman Catholic Cathedral; Alba Iulia–Cetate south-western side; Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street; Pecica; Gâmbaş; Blandiana “B” cemetery; Salonta–Testhalom; Sălacea–Vidahegy.

**2. On the slope of the hill:** Biharea–Şumuleu, Nădlac; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare, Vânătorilor Street; Cluj-Napoca–Farkas Street; Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street (on the northern side!); Sfântu Gheorghe–Epreştető; Orăştie–Dealul Pemilor X2; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy; Moldoveneşti; Zalău–Palvar.

**3. On settlement mounds before the Hungarian conquest (mainly prehistoric):** Vărşand–Laposhalom; Hodoni–Pocioroane; Voiteni; Comloşu Mare–Town northern side; Dudeştii Vechi–II–VI mounds.

**4. On natural mounds:** Arad–Ceala; Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaş; Comloşu Mare–Posztyszállás; Teremia Mare; Nădlac–Cemetery; Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises; Dudeştii Vechi–Dragomir mound; Şeitin–Homokdomb; Şiclău–Gropoai; Timişoara–Cioreni.

**5. On flat ground:** Alba Iulia–Brănduşei Street; Izvorul Împăratului; Nădlac–Pompa de apă; Dumbrăviţa.

**6. Inside of a castle:** Biharea–Castle; Şirioara–Podirei; Zalău–Ortelec.

## II. The grave pit

### II. 1. The depth of the graves

One of the greatest difficulties in analysing graves is to establish their depth at the moment of their digging. In the course of the statistical processing, we should take into consideration the topography of the cemetery and the disturbances caused by farming. The best example is the case of the cemetery from Timişoara Cioreni. Before the archaeological excavation, excavating machines had destroyed a stratum of about 40 cm, with the exception of the surroundings of graves 1–3, which had not suffered such a deep damage. We have considered this when calculating the mean of grave depth. In our statistics, we put the grave depth of cemeteries of the three regions in separate groups.

**Banat:**

Mean of grave depths

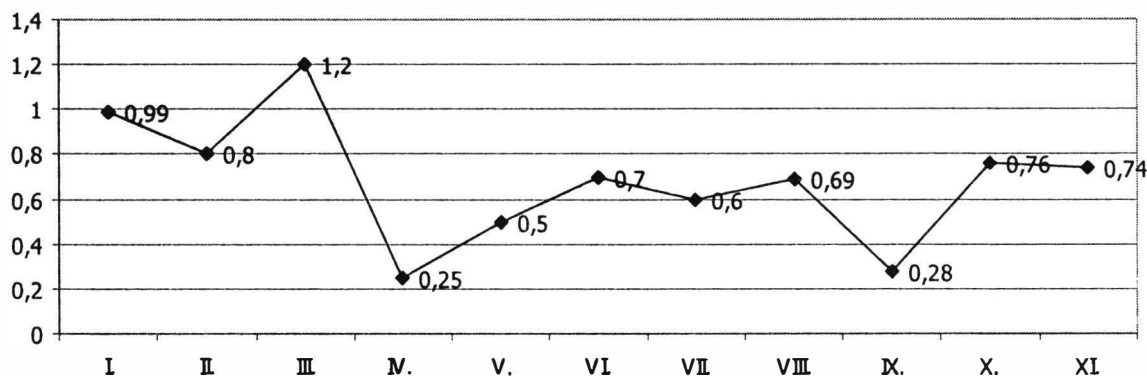


Figure 4. The means of grave depth in cemeteries analysed in Banat:

- I. Hodoni – 11 graves (mean depth: 99 cm)
- II. Comloșu Mare – 1 grave (mean depth: 80 cm)
- III. Sânpetru German – 1 grave (depth: 120 cm)
- IV. Dudeștii Vechi – II mound – 1 grave (depth: 25 cm)
- V. Dudeștii Vechi – III mound – 1 grave (depth: 50 cm)
- VI. Dudeștii Vechi – IV mound – 2 graves (mean depth: 70 cm)
- VII. Dudeștii Vechi – VI mound – 1 grave (depth: 60 cm)
- VIII. Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – 4 graves (mean depth: 69 cm)
- IX. Timișoara–Cioreni – 18 graves (mean depth: 28 cm)
- X. Dumbrăvița – 3 graves (mean depth: 76 cm)
- XI. Voiteni – 7 graves (mean depth: 74 cm)

#### Transylvania:

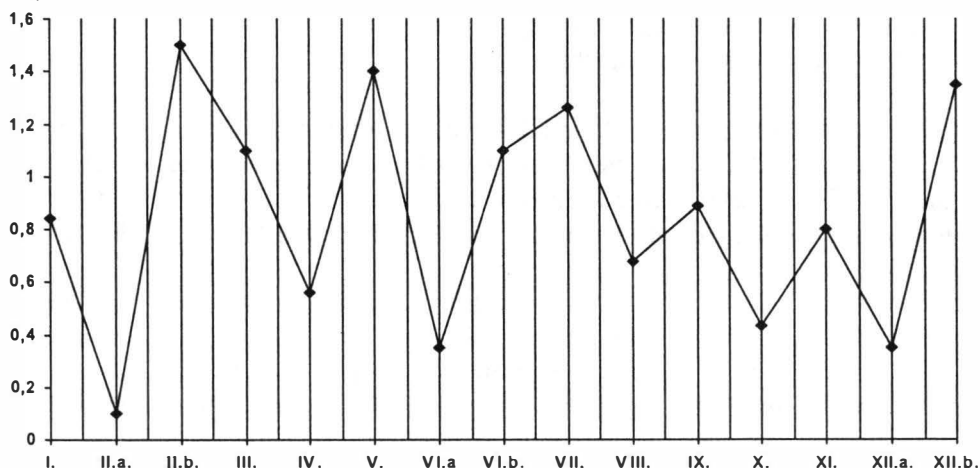


Figure 5. The means of grave depth of cemeteries analysed in Transylvania:

- I. Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – 55 analysable graves (mean depth: 84.5 cm.)
- II.a–b. Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare – 1300 graves (the smallest and the biggest grave depth 0.10–1.50 m.)
- III. Alba Iulia–Cetate southwestern part – 1 grave (depth: 110 cm)
- IV. Blandiana “B” – 11 analysable graves (mean depth: 56 cm)
- V. Cluj-Napoca–Farkas Street – 1 grave (depth: 140 cm)
- VI.a–b. Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street (the smallest and the biggest grave depth: 35–110 cm)
- VII. Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – 8 analysable graves (mean depth: 126 cm)
- VIII. Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – 9 analysable graves (mean depth: 68 cm)
- IX. Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – 53 analysable graves (mean depth: 89 cm)
- X. Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár garden – 53 analysable graves (mean depth: 43 cm)
- XI. Alba Iulia–Roman Catholic Cathedral (mean depth: 80 cm)
- XII.a–b. Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street (the smallest and the biggest grave depth: 35–135 cm)

#### Crișana:

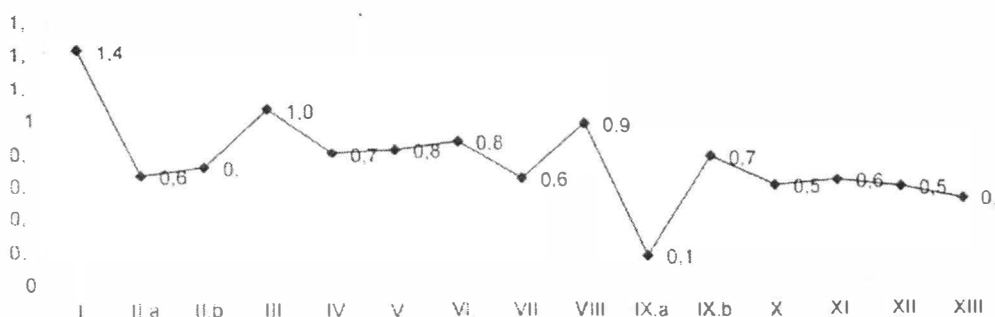


Figure 6. The means of grave depth of cemeteries analysed in Crișana:

- I. Arad–Ceala – 1 grave (141 cm)
- II.a–b. Biharea – 8 graves (the smallest and the biggest grave depth: 65–70 cm)
- III. Biharea–Middle of the Castle – 11 graves (mean depth: 105 cm)
- IV. Vârşand–Laposhalom – 63 graves (mean depth: 78 cm)
- V. Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaş –9 graves (mean depth: 81 cm)
- VI. Salonta–Testhalom – 2 graves (mean depth: 86 cm)
- VII. Şeitin–Homokdomb – 3 graves (mean: 63 cm)
- VIII. Şiclău–Gropoaie – 12 graves (mean: 96 cm)
- IX.a. Sălacea–Vidahegy – 12 graves (the smallest and the biggest grave depth: 16–75 cm)
- IX.b. Sălacea–Vidahegy – 12 graves (mean depth: 75 cm)
- X. Zalău–Palvar –12 graves (mean depth: 58 cm)
- XI. Zalău–Ortelec – 10 graves (mean depth: 61 cm)
- XII. Moftinu Mic –13 graves (mean depth: 57 cm)
- XIII. Oradea–"În Vii" – 6 graves (mean depth: 50 cm)

The mean grave depth is between 50 and 130 cm, the majority of the graves being dug at 60–100 cm. The 100 graves from Stația de Salvare, dated in the 9th century have a depth between 150 and 175 cm (just like the two 170 cm deep graves from Blandiana cemetery "A", with very unusual furnishings). This is quite normal for a great part of the cemeteries from the Lower Danube region (mainly the graves with W-E orientation were dug deeper).

The grave depth of cemeteries of the 10th–11th century analysed in Transylvania, Banat and Crişana does not differ significantly from those known from other regions. The research in Crişana and in Transylvania offers relatively more information than that in Banat about the grave depths (163 analysable graves from 13 sites, 191 analysable graves from 9 sites and 1507 unpublished graves from 3 sites).

## II. 2. The shape and the size of the graves (pl. 1)

It is impossible to include in the analysis all the graves:

1. The observation of the whole contour of grave fill was seldom possible.
2. A large number of graves were inaccurately excavated.

Nevertheless, we tried to classify the available data:

1. *Regular, straight-walled grave pits with distinct corners*: Zalău–Palvar – graves 6–7.
2. *Regular, straight-walled pentagonal grave pits*: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 10.
3. *Grave pits that widen at the head and taper at the legs, with rounded corners*: Zalău–Palvar – graves 9–11.
4. *Trapezoid grave pits that taper at the head and widen at the legs, with rounded corners*: Orăştie–graves 2, 4.
5. *Simple grave pits with rounded corners*: Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare,<sup>49</sup> Hodoni–grave 17; Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street – graves 1–26; Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – graves 1–7, 9; Blandiana "B" cemetery – graves 1–9, 11–13, 14, 16; Orăştie – graves 1, 5, 7, 8; Voiteni – graves 1–7; Zalău–Palvar – grave 7.
6. *Oval grave pit*: Şiclău – grave 3; Zalău–Palvar – grave 12.
7. *Trough-shaped grave pits*: Gâmbaş – graves 5–9.

We have even less data on the size of the graves: only for Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street, Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaş – graves 3, 11, 13, 20–22, 28–29, 32; Salonta – 1–2, Dudeştii Vechi–Dragomir mound – 2–4 graves; Voiteni – graves 3 and 6. Among these, the biggest one is the pit of grave 4 in Dudeştii Vechi, which is 230 cm long (see pl. 23).

<sup>49</sup> According to the excavator, approx. 65%. Ciugudeanu, 1996. 5.

The practice of burial into a large size grave, quite common in the Migration Period, was not represented in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat. It was quite rare in the other regions of Carpathian basin as well in the 10th–11th centuries (e.g., Zemplin).<sup>50</sup>

### II. 3. The orientation of graves

*II. 3. 1. W-E orientation (pl. 1; pl. 8: grave 26; pl. 9: graves 28, 32, 34; pl. 11: grave 31; pl. 12: graves 37, 38; pl. 13: graves 40, 42; pl. 14: graves 45, 47; pl. 21, pl. 22; pl. 23, 25–26, 29–30, 33)*

In Transylvania, Crișana and Banat almost all of the graves have **W-E** orientation or its variants. There is no difference between the graves recovered in other regions of the Carpathian basin.

Cases:

**1. W-E:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 1–2, 7–8, 10, 13, 15, 19, 21, 31, 34, 36, 37, 39, 45, 48, 50, 51; Biharea–Cetate – graves 2–5, 7–11; Biharea – graves 1–8; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare – number of graves unknown; Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street (118 graves, *i.e.*, 63,44%); Alba Iulia–Pâclișă – graves 2–3; Cluj–Zăpolya – graves 9–11, Vărșand–Laposhalom–graves 2–4, 6–7, 9–10, 12–28, 31, 33, 35–36, 47; Domonkos – grave 2; Hodoni–graves 1, 4–13; 16, Moftinu Mic – graves 8, 13; Gâmbaș – graves 1–4; Blandiana “B” “În Vii” – graves 2, 3, 6–9, 12–16; Mureș Nădlac–number of graves unknown; Oradea–“În Vii” – graves 1–7; Salonta–Testhalom – graves 1–2; Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises; Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare–VI mound; Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – graves 1–3; Șeitin – graves 1–4; Șiclău – graves 1–5, 7–11; Sălacea–Vida hill – graves 1–3, 9, 17; Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – graves 1–4, 7; Timișoara–Cioreni–A-M, graves 1–20; Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár garden –graves 1–3, 5, 7–9, 11–12, 14–25, 27–29, 31, 33–42, 44, 47–48, 51–53, 55–56; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 1–4, 7–8, 11, 13–15, 17–21, 22–35, 37–41, 43–45, 47, 49–52, 54; Voiteni – graves 2–3; Șirioara–Balta Jătei, several graves; Zalău–Palvar – graves 1–12; Zalău–Ortelec – graves 1–42 and graves 2, 6–8, 10/2001.

**2. SW-NE:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 18, 38, 55; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare – number of graves unknown; Vărșand–Laposhalom – graves 37–39, 41–46, 48–52, 54, 56; Dudeștii Vechi–II mound, III mound, Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – grave 4; Zalău–Ortelec – graves 3, 5, 9/2001.

**3. NW-SE:** Biharea–Castle – graves 1, 6; Ciacova–Gherghianu – graves 1–3; Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 3, 9, 49; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare – number of graves unknown; Hodoni – grave 3; Cluj–Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 2; Gâmbaș – grave 10; Blandiana – graves 1, 4, 5, 11; Voiteni – graves 1, 4, 5; Zalău–Ortelec – graves 3, 4/2001.

**4. WNW-SES:** Arad–Ceala, Cluj–Zăpolya – graves 3, 4, 5, 7, Vărșand–Laposhalom – grave 32.

**5. WSW-NEN:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 4, Cluj–Zăpolya – grave 6.

We have only data of cemeteries in Alba Iulia Vânătorilor Street, where 68 graves, *i.e.*, 36.55% have an W-E orientation or one which approximates it. We have much less data on the orientation of skeletons of Alba Iulia Stația de Salvare and Izvorul Împăratului cemeteries. The data on the orientation of Cluj–Napoca–Pata Street cemetery are also inaccurate. In the excavator’s opinion, the orientation of graves is W-E. We should treat with caution the data about the last 11 graves recovered in Zalău, Ortelec site. Unfortunately, the excavators declined to publish information on graves 10–42 of Orăștie cemetery.

That is why we should use our statistics very cautiously: only 530 graves are documented to have a W-E orientation. We have much less data on the variants of this orientation, probably because of the inaccuracy of documentation. We know 26 cases of **SW-NE** orientation, in 16 cases **NW-SE** orientation. We know five cases of **WSW-ENE** orientation and two graves of **WSW-ENE** orientation. At some sites, for example at Vărșand–Laposhalom, it has not been explained why for some of the graves the orientation is W-E, while for other it is of SW-NE, or in some cases NW-SE.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Tettamanti, 1975. 90–91.

<sup>51</sup> Nowadays graves are dug after the orientation of the other pits. It cannot have been done in a different way at that time. Therefore, it is unexplained why a part of graves is of W-E orientation, while some others differ from these by a few degrees.

In some, we have no data on the orientation, although archaeologists excavated them: Alba Iulia–Brândușei – grave 11, Vărșand–Laposhalom – grave 40.

It would make a significant contribution to our database if the cemeteries with a large number of graves of Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare and Vladimirescu had been published and if we had more accurate knowledge about the Alba Iulia Izvorul Împăratului and Vânătorilor Street cemeteries. We could continue our list with more unpublished cemeteries, where we do not have information of this kind, but it is almost certain that the orientation of graves would not differ from the orientation generally known in the 10th–11th centuries.

*II. 3. 2. Burials with inverse orientation (map 4; pl. 8: graves 25, 30; pl. 9: grave 29; pl. 10: graves 29, 39; pl. 11: graves 35–36; pl. 12: grave 43; pl. 13: grave 41; pl. 14: graves 44, 46; pl. 20: grave 29; pl. 34)*

In several cases the orientation in cemeteries dated to the Hungarian Conquest Period differs from the usual type.

Types of orientation and their sites:

I. E-W and its variants:

1. E-W: Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare (number of graves unknown), Alba Iulia–Brândușei St. – 5–6, 16, 22 A-B, 26, 41, 44, Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului (3 of the 22 graves are E-W orientated), Moftinu Mic-Domb – graves 9.

2. EN-WN: Alba Iulia – 25, 27–28, 29, 30, 32–33, 35, 42–43, 46, 54.

II. N-S. and its variants:

1. N-S: Moftinu Mic – grave 5; Cluj-Napoca–Pata St. – grave 26; Sălacea – one of the graves, Uivar – graves 1–2.

2. NNW-EES: Moftinu Mic – graves 1–4, 6–7, 10, 12.

III. S-N:

1. S-N.: Alba Iulia–Brândușei St. – grave 52; Tărian–Movila lui Ciordaș – grave 29, Șiclău – grave 6.

2. SW-NE: Alba Iulia–Brândușei St. – grave 4.

These orientations are not known for the horse and weapon burials dated to the classical Hungarian Conquest.

*E-W* orientated burials exclusively characterise an Alba Iulia group. These burials constitute a significant proportion in the three cemeteries of Alba Iulia (Stația de Salvare, Izvorul Împăratului, Brândușei, etc.). To them can be added 3 graves of the Izvorul Împăratului cemetery and 17 graves of the 57-grave cemetery of Brândușei Street.

Analysing the map of the Brândușei Street cemetery, graves 5–6 from the burials recovered in 1997 were superposed. Grave 16 was at a small distance from the main group of burials in the eastern part of the cemetery, grave 22, a double burial (mother and child) was placed by the side of grave 21, which was W-E orientated; probably the graves of a small family. The sex of the individuals buried in these graves is unknown. On the map of the 23 graves discovered in 1999 small groups can be detected. Graves 35–36 and 46, E-W orientated, definitely belong to the same group according to the map. The rest are of inverse orientation, but they do not constitute a group on the map. *Graves 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, which are stone-covered and are separated from the next row of graves by another row without stone covering, among which there are also plain, simple burials, form a group (25, 28–30, 43–44).* We can only make guesses at the sex of those interred, since no anthropological analyses were made on this part of the cemetery. The skeleton interred in grave 26 may have been a of a child or of an adolescent and the persons in graves 27, 28, 30, 54 were probably children. On the grounds of anthropological traits – the height measured in the grave is 182 centimetres – it seems reasonable to assume that the interred was a male in grave 35. Graves discovered on the eastern side of the excavation site in 2001 were found together with another grave having inverse, SE-NW orientation. Thus, after an analysis of the three parts of the cemetery, it is clear that – apart from one group – the graves are not assembled in groups.

Parts of the following graves were covered with stones or bricks: 5–6, 25, 28, 29, 30, 41, 43, 44, and 52. Since nine graves out of 18 show this feature, we can infer that the most salient feature of E-W orientated burials is the stone or brick covering, a feature alien to Hungarian burials.

Unfortunately, there are no maps available for the other cemeteries; therefore, no such observations can be made, since these two burial sites are not published. There are no maps available for the cemetery of Moftinu Mic either, where there is one grave with E-W orientation.

I would like to emphasise that the finds in E-W orientated graves are not different from those with W-E orientation, which makes it clear that further research and analyses should be done on burial customs, and possibly by discovering similarities with other regions we could get closer to understanding ethnic and cultural phenomena. In many cases objects regarded as belonging to certain ethnic groups lead to false conclusions suggesting political or military events.<sup>52</sup>

Burials with E-W orientation are known from many sites in the Carpathian Basin. However, a more concentrated and better separated group of graves is known only from the cemetery of Ibrány–Esbóhalom/Hungary.<sup>53</sup> Here there are six graves with this orientation, forming a clearly distinct group in the southern part of the cemetery, and another five graves, again with the same orientation, in another part of the cemetery. There are other sites with one or two such graves each.<sup>54</sup>

The 22 graves with E-W orientation (plus one grave with E-W orientation from Stația de Salvare, whose number is unknown), discovered in the cemetery of Alba Iulia, form a unique cultural (and probably ethnical) group. So many graves with inverse orientation are not known from any other cemetery in the 10th century.

Graves with E-W orientation are also known sites dating from the early Avar period in the regions east of the river Tisza,<sup>55</sup> but the best parallels are to be found in Transylvanian cemeteries dating from the 8th–9th centuries, and in cemeteries from the region of the Lower Danube, dating from the 8th–10th centuries. There are three graves at Mediaș–Villadomb, in Transylvania, and 9 graves at Ocna Sibiului, with NE-SW, and NNE-SSW orientation, respectively.<sup>56</sup>

There is a wealth of information available on the cemeteries from the Lower Danube region. In these cemeteries graves with another orientation than W-E form a significant percentage (graves with not only E-W, but S-N and N-S orientation as well). At the same time, as we will see later on, the different orientations are often accompanied by brick covering, similarly to some of the graves with E-W orientation in Alba Iulia.

At the Histria–Capul Viilor site, the main orientation of burials is N-S, yet another frequent orientation is E-W (graves 25, 49, 62, 85, 89, 101, 116, 119, 132, 133, 135, 136, 152, 193, 214).<sup>57</sup> Five inhumed graves out of eight in the biritual cemetery of Frățești are E-W orientated.<sup>58</sup> Also in the Giurgiu county, in the cemetery from Izvoru, with 344 inhumed and 100 cremated burials, the only E-W orientated grave is no. 188, with no funerary goods.<sup>59</sup> This orientation is known for some of the 95

<sup>52</sup> For instance, K.Z. Pinter and I.A. Țiplic believe that the skeletons found in the cemetery in Deva belonged to the soldiers of István I because only the soldiers of Géza, and then later those István I could have used Carolingian weapons (??) and that the cemetery recently recovered at Orăștie contained the graves of the soldiers of the “autochthon” Gyula. In the cemetery in Deva two women and a child were buried beside four men, not to mention that in the part of the Orăștie cemetery recovered by them, containing 42 graves, women, children and men were buried. K.Z. Pinter, 1994–96.241; Țiplic, 1999, 150–153.

<sup>53</sup> Istvánovits, 1996, 25–47.

<sup>54</sup> Tiszaberce I–Agricultural School, Homokmégy–Halom, etc.

<sup>55</sup> Lőrinczy, 1992, 161–172.

<sup>56</sup> Horedt, 1965, 7–23; Protase, 1965, 153–159.

<sup>57</sup> Zirra, 1963, 355–412.

<sup>58</sup> Dolinescu-Ferche, Ionescu, 1970, 419–430.

<sup>59</sup> As far as funerary customs are concerned, the best parallels in Transylvania are Stația de Salvare in Alba Iulia, and the cemetery dating from the 9th century in Blandiana: sheep-goat, cattle, pig, horse, fowl, eggs, and pottery. B. Mitrea, 1989, 145–219.

inhumed burials in the biritual cemetery discovered near Obârșia Nouă.<sup>60</sup> In the cemetery from Sultana grave 134 is E-W orientated.<sup>61</sup>

In cemeteries further south, already in Bulgaria, the proportion of graves with orientations different from W-E is much larger, but this does not apply to the E-W orientation. In cemetery No. 1 in Devnja, 4 skeletons are E-W orientated in three graves (11, 24a, 24c, 73). In the cemetery of Kjulevca there is an example of E-W orientation (grave 184). We emphasize the fact that a significant part of the graves with E-W orientation were brick-covered. The connections between these funerary customs will be further analysed below.

**The graves with N-S orientation** are less frequent than those of group I. At the same time, sites with such graves are known from Crișana, Banat and Northern Transylvania as well.

In Crișana, there are nine known graves in Moftinu Mic. Unfortunately, because of the lack of an anthropological analysis, the sex of the interred is unknown (it may be of interest that in two graves with W-E orientation, grave 8 and 11, children were buried). In graves 1, 6 and 7, children were buried, in the others adults, but their sex has not been determined.

A child's grave, which can be dated by a *solidus* of Romanos Diogenes, dating it in the first part of the 10th century, has been recently discovered at Uivar. There is one more grave of an adult.<sup>62</sup> In grave 26 in Pata street, a *senilis* woman was buried.

The graves at Uivar are very important, and their presence in Banat adds further research questions for the rich Romanian literature in this field. In N-W Crișana the cemetery of Moftinu Mic is likewise important. Its graves were mostly N-S orientated (with variations). Similarly to the cemetery of Șiclău, grave 26 with N-S orientation from the Pata Street cemetery in Cluj-Napoca was discovered together with 25 graves, all W-E orientated.

This orientation is documented in other cemeteries in the Carpathian basin. The question of possible connection between these burials and the N-S orientated burials dating from the Avar period arises.

This orientation occurs in much larger proportion in cemeteries from the Lower Danube region. In the Histria–Capul Viilor cemetery 14 graves were N-S orientated (18, 31, 33, 48, 79, 80, 86, 90, 93, 163, 220, 256).<sup>63</sup> Graves with N-S orientation form groups in the above-mentioned Izvoru cemetery, which is well organised as far as the orientation of the graves is concerned.<sup>64</sup> The N-S orientation prevails in the biritual cemetery near Obârșia Nouă;<sup>65</sup> it is also quite frequent for the inhumed graves in Sultana,<sup>66</sup> and its proportion is significant in cemeteries in Bulgaria. 40 graves out of 53 inhumed graves in cemetery No. 1 in Devnja were orientated this way (2, 4, 10, 13–14, 17, 22, 24b, 26, 28, 40, 43, 46–47, 48a–b, 49, 50, 52, 53, 59, 60, 62, 66–70, 72, 74–75, 77, 83–84, 86, 88–92). The 17 inhumed graves in Varna are all N-S orientated.

It is interesting to note that this orientation can be found in all regions, contrary to the E-W orientation, which occurs almost exclusively in Transylvania (one exception is grave 9 in the cemetery of Moftinu Mic). In the cemetery from Moftinu Mic is noteworthy that out of its 13 graves, nine were N-S or NNW-SSE orientated.

The third group is made of graves with **S-N orientation**. Three cases are known. Two are from a site from Șiclău, grave 6 and Tărian; the other one comes from the Brândușei Street cemetery in Alba Iulia. The grave in Șiclău was close to grave 5 (a child's grave), so it is not unlikely that it may have been the grave of a woman, the one in Tărian was a burial with a band bracelet and a horse bit. Grave 4 in Alba Iulia seems to have been grouped together with graves 12 and 24, which were W-E orientated. Unfortunately, no anthropological analysis has been done for these graves, which means that a great amount of information may have been lost. In grave 12 a clay vessel, in grave 24 a bear tusk are objects representing pagan beliefs.

<sup>60</sup> Toropu, Stoica, 1972, 163–188.

<sup>61</sup> Mitrea, 1988, 91–139.

<sup>62</sup> Its funerary goods are unknown since it has not been published.

<sup>63</sup> Zirra, 1963, 355–412.

<sup>64</sup> Mitrea, 1989, 145–219.

<sup>65</sup> Toropu, Stoica, 1972, 163–175.

<sup>66</sup> Mitrea, 1988, 91–139.

This orientation is also known in the cemeteries of the Lower Danube region, as well as in the graves of Zalakomár–Lesdülő/Hungary, dating from the 8th–9th centuries.<sup>67</sup> In the Lower Danube/Bulgaria cemeteries its proportion is relatively small. There are two graves (23, 27) in cemetery No. 1 in Devnja, and six in cemetery No. 3 (graves 58, 65, 90, 103, 115, 150, 156). At Histria-Capul Viilor, there is only one burial with such orientation (grave 73). In the Izvoru cemetery, only grave 234 has an S-N orientation.<sup>68</sup>

**The following conclusions may be drawn:**

1. The main group of graves with orientations different from W-E has an E-W orientation; then follow groups with N-S and S-N orientation.
2. A significant proportion of graves with another orientation than W-E are documented as occurring in the cemeteries of Alba Iulia. Besides 23 graves reliably documented there was an unknown number of graves with E-W orientation recovered in the Stația de Salvare cemetery. As we will see, in these cemeteries other burial customs and phenomena are observable, which are alien to the conquering Hungarians.
3. The closest parallels with the irregularity of orientation in these cemeteries (W-E, E-W, and N-S) are the cemeteries in the Lower Danube region,<sup>69</sup> but such irregularity is not unknown in the biritual cemeteries from Western Hungary.<sup>70</sup> This geographical distribution lends itself to suppositions as to the population behind these phenomena.
4. In burials with other orientation than W-E there were no examples of weapons, harness or horse burials.
5. Without sufficient anthropological analyses, we cannot determine the sex of the interred from burials with another orientation than W-E. We may safely assume, however, that children and adolescents were buried in graves with E-W orientation: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street. – 5, 22 B, 26, 27, 28, 30, 54.
6. Their chronology is not at all easy to determine. The N-S orientation is perhaps best dated by grave 1 in Uivar, which is dated to the first part of the 10th century. Since there were no coins found in the graves in the other cases, we may only rely on dubious typological chronologies. We suppose that these irregular cases are mostly characteristic of the 10th century. From the 11th century, there is only example, dated to its end, from the churchyard in Cluj–Mănăstur,<sup>71</sup> and we think that belong to a transition period. It would probably worthwhile to statistically compare the proportion of burials with irregular orientation and its dating. Its most significant geographical and proportional distribution dates back to the 8th–9th centuries. We think that the W-E orientation became universal in the 11th century, with the spread of Christianity, and that the individuals buried in the previously mentioned cemeteries and their communities lived though a transition period in this respect.<sup>72</sup>

### III. The preparation of the graves

#### III. 1. Coffin burials (pl. 33)

The coffin burials in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat are probably not representative of the actual number of this type of burial. This is caused by defective observation, insufficient documentation, and sometimes by the quality of soil.

<sup>67</sup> Szőke, Vándor, 1983, 69–86.

<sup>68</sup> Mitrea, 1989, 145–219.

<sup>69</sup> A closer adherence to the “burial order” of the cemeteries of the conquering Hungarians is noticeable in the cemeteries along the Lower Danube. One such example is the cemetery of Izvoru, where 319 graves of the total of 344 inhumed burials are of the W-E type of orientation.

<sup>70</sup> Szőke, 1984, 255–260.

<sup>71</sup> Grave 151: Iambor, Matei, 1983, 138, VII, pl. 15.

<sup>72</sup> Let us not forget the fact that in the 8th–10th centuries the Slav peoples were gradually adopting inhumed burials instead of cremation burials.

The coffin burials recovered in the Carpathian basin were collected by S. Tettamanti 30 years ago.<sup>73</sup> Since then the number of coffin burials have increased considerably, but there is no recent literature on this issue.

There are two types of coffins in the burials from the 10th–11th centuries:

*III.1. Composite or tree-trunk coffins:* Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 19<sup>74</sup>, Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare,<sup>75</sup> Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 15,<sup>76</sup> Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului,<sup>77</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street – grave 21,<sup>78</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – 17, 20, 23, 24, 29, 38;<sup>79</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Gábor's garden –grave 16;<sup>80</sup> Zalău–Palvar – graves 6, 7.<sup>81</sup>

*III.2. Coffins with metal components:* Blandiana–“B” cemetery –grave,<sup>82</sup> Zalău–Palvar – grave 8.<sup>83</sup>

The first type is suggested by the discoloured soil, the second by the coffin nails as well. Archaeological data at our disposal do not help to determine the techniques used in the making of the first type of coffins, so any attempt at reconstruction is pure conjecture – there is no knowing whether these were made of planks joined together or of tree trunks. According to the excavator of the Pata Street cemetery in Cluj-Napoca, the coffin in grave 21 was made of a carved tree-trunk, but there is no evidence substantiating this claim. There are indications about the remains of the coffin in some cases, but these are far from exact, although the possibility of their being made of planks cannot be excluded.<sup>84</sup> It seems certain that the coffin in grave 38 from Hunedoara was made of planks, since Roska mentions their remains in his study. In the rest of the cases, only unspecified coffin remains are mentioned. For instance, all we know about grave 19 in Brândușei Street in Alba Iulia is that there were “remains of wood” in the grave. There is even less information about coffins discovered in the unpublished cemeteries from Stația de Salvare, Izvorul Împăratului and Vânătorilor Street.

The remains of metal components in coffins are contradictory in the following two sites. One coffin nail from grave 2 in Blandiana may be indicative of this type, but it is highly unlikely for a coffin to have only one nail. It is possible, on the other hand that this is due to insufficient documentation. This case, nonetheless, is to be treated with caution.

There is no question, however, about the existence of iron components in the coffin discovered in grave 8 from Zalău–Palvar, since we have excellent data on this grave. The coffin of the individual was held together with iron clamps. One thing is certain: even if we accept the case found in Blandiana, its type is very different from its counterpart found in Palvar.

### ***Sex, chronology, archaeological context and geographical distribution of skeletons in coffin burials***

Based on the data at our disposal from Transylvania, Crișana and Banat we can venture to make only very cautious remarks because of the state of anthropological research. In addition, a large proportion of coffin burials is not published (Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare, Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 15, Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului, Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street – grave 12). In some cases, the graves were rummaged and ransacked to such an extent, that further anthropological analysis of the bones was impossible (Blandiana “B” – grave 2). Anthropological analyses were not performed on the

<sup>73</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 85.

<sup>74</sup> Drâmbărean, Rodean, Gligor, Moga, Anghel, 1998, 189.

<sup>75</sup> Ciugudeanu, 1996, 1.

<sup>76</sup> Blăjan, Stoicovici, Botezatu, 1990–1991, 273.

<sup>77</sup> CCArh, 2002, 33.

<sup>78</sup> Information graciously offered by Ioana Hica.

<sup>79</sup> Roska, 1913, 172–175, 176–177.

<sup>80</sup> Roska, 1914, 131.

<sup>81</sup> Băcuet Cr.-Băcuet S., 2003.40, pl. 71.

<sup>82</sup> Horedt, 1966, 276, 23.pl. 14–15.

<sup>83</sup> Băcuet-Crișan, S., 2003, 40, 72. pl. 1.

<sup>84</sup> Márton Roska made this observation on graves from Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 20: “the place of the grave, 180 cm long and 39 cm wide, is markedly distinct from the yellow clay; at the sides there were remains of the coffin”; grave 29: “its remains are visible”; grave 38: “brown tracks and pieces of planks”, and from Moldovenești – grave 16: “pieces of planks at the head”.

recently discovered graves (Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 19, Zalău–Palvar); this was not to be expected in the case of the graves recovered at the beginning of the last century (Hunedoara–Kincseshegy, Moldovenești).

Practically speaking we can rely only on observations of the dimensions of the skeletons, according to which in the graves children were deposited. These are: Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – 17, 24 and Zalău–Pálfalva – grave 8. We can assume therefore that coffin burials were used for children burials as well.

The exact chronology of coffin burials cannot be determined. There are two possibilities to answer whether the coffin remains recovered in burials dating from the 10th–11th centuries are the direct continuation of a local tradition or the signals of an incoming new cultural horizon. This burial custom was mostly unknown in the burials of the “military” stratum from the Hungarian Conquest Period (one exception is Zemplin),<sup>85</sup> quite unlike the lower stratum cemeteries. Therefore, an exact chronology cannot be determined.

We can point out to the fact that this custom was practised in cemeteries in the 8th–9th centuries Transylvania. Coffin burials (graves 3–5) are known among the 32 graves of the Ciumbrud cemetery,<sup>86</sup> as well as in grave 8 recovered at point X8 of Dealul Pemilor in Orăștie, where remains of wood at the head of the interred were interpreted by the excavators as rests of coffin.<sup>87</sup> I would like to emphasise that no coffin burials of 9th century belonging to the cemeteries in Transylvania can be assigned to a heathen Bulgarian population. Such negative results are yielded by the “A” cemetery in Blandiana,<sup>88</sup> by the graves belonging to the Bulgarian phase in Stația de Salvare<sup>89</sup> and probably by the 2 graves from the cemetery of Sebeș.<sup>90</sup> The population of Ciumbrud and Orăștie is entirely different in its rites<sup>91</sup>, although these populations probably co-existed.<sup>92</sup> It is clear that the custom of coffin burial was known in 9th century Transylvania.

The population of the cemeteries of the 10th–11th centuries may have adopted or brought this custom with them. The question of how and with what method coffin burials in the cemeteries at hand can be more precisely dated deserves further discussion.

We have more data on the chronology of composite or carved coffin burials. Unfortunately, we have only a few full cemetery maps. There is sufficient information on grave 19 in the Brândușei Street part of the cemetery in Alba Iulia. The grave without funerary goods can be dated to the second half of the 10th century in the present state of the cemetery. According to its excavator, the “very small number” of coffin burials discovered in Stația de Salvare can be dated to the same period. The graves discovered at Izvorul Împăratului cannot be dated more accurately than to the 10th century. If tentative, our hypothesis is that the coffin burial in grave 12 in Cluj-Napoca can be dated before the last third of the century. No other dating is acceptable for graves 6 and 7 in Zalău–Palvar-domb in the farther off, wooded region of Sălaj, notwithstanding the hybrid theories of the excavators.<sup>93</sup> The following coffin burials can be dated unambiguously to the 11th century: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 15, Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 17, 20, 23, 24, 29, 38 and Moldovenești–Jósika Gábor garden-grave 16.

<sup>85</sup> Budinsky-Kricka, Fettich, 1973, plate 27.

<sup>86</sup> Dankanits, Ferenczi, 1959, 605–612.

<sup>87</sup> Luca, K. Pinter, 2001, 64, plate 4.

<sup>88</sup> Anghel Ciugudeanu, 1987, 179–196.

<sup>89</sup> Ciugudeanu, 1996, 5–7.

<sup>90</sup> Schuster, 1865, 437–443; Schuster, 1867, 3–16; Simina, 2001, 1–16.

<sup>91</sup> There is much debate about the chronology of these cemeteries. Most authors date the Ciumbrud cemetery to the 9th–10th c.; according to other studies, the Hungarians settled this population in Transylvania after their victory of 907 in Bratislava. The 11 graves in the Orăștie cemetery were quite rightly dated to the 8th–9th c.. Dankanits, Ferenczi, 1959, 605–612; Madgearu, 2001, 190–194; Luca, Pinter, 2001, 113.

<sup>92</sup> In graves attributed to different rites, as created by archaeologists (“Blandiana” of heathen rite and “Ciumbrud” of Christian rite) the finds were chronologically similar, which may signify the co-existence of the two groups. For further information on this question, see Gáll, 2004 (ms).

<sup>93</sup> For a thorough analysis of the question, see the article on the typological chronology. Gáll, 2005a (ms.)

Graves with the other type of coffin cannot be dated any later. Both the Blandiana and the Zalău nail and iron-clamp coffin burials have to be dated by relative chronology to the second half of the 10th century. Examples of the second type of coffin burials are dating only from the 10th century; no such finds survive from preceding periods in the region.

In view of the available data, it seems plausible to claim that coffin burials date mainly from the second half of the 10th century. No connections with the preceding rite of coffin burials in the 8th–9th centuries can be established.

When analysing the archaeological context some traits are to be considered. There are no examples of weapon or horse coffin burials, not even in cemeteries with interspersed weapon and horse burials, like Stația de Salvare in Alba Iulia and the Pata Street cemetery in Cluj-Napoca. Unfortunately, both are unpublished; therefore, there is no available data on the topographical position of the coffin burials in the cemetery and their relation (chronological, ritual, etc.) to horse and weapon burials found in the cemetery. It is clear, however, that the grave 22 of the Pata Street cemetery in Cluj-Napoca is markedly different in its ritual from the other graves. The same difference can be found – according to data published by H. Ciugudeanu (“the coffin burial is rare”) – in the cemetery part discovered at Stația de Salvare. Grave 2 in Blandiana belongs to the same group, which was discovered in a burial site of a weapon-bearing stratum (where, on the other hand, horse burial was not practised). The arrowhead,<sup>94</sup> recovered in grave 2, is not to be considered a weapon, but an amulet.<sup>95</sup>

It is without question that the cemeteries belonging to the lower social stratum contain the vast majority of the cases (we would prefer the term “weaponless”, since there is no data on the status of those interred with weapons or horse, or of those without any weapons). Yet coffin burials are by no means frequent in these cemeteries either.

In the cemeteries of Alba Iulia, apart from Stația de Salvare mentioned above, there were examples of coffin burials in one grave in Brândușei Street, also in one grave in Vânătorilor Street, and in graves at Izvorul Împăratului, where the number of cases is unknown at present. There are no signs whatsoever of a weapon-bearing or “military” stratum, these graves are characterised by stone or limestone covering, and by the proportionally larger representation of the E-W orientation.

As far as the castle dwelling population is concerned, it was mostly that of Hunedoara that practised the rite of coffin burial. In six graves out of the 55, there were remains of coffin found, whereas in Moldovenesti there is only one known example of coffin burial.

Also dating from the 11th century, from the territory of the state of István I, is the coffin burial of grave 105 in Vânătorilor Street (it was the cemetery of the bailiff and bishopric centre). Outside Transylvania, in Sălaj region, were recovered some coffin graves from the Zalău–Palvar cemetery dating from the 10th–11th centuries (graves 6–8). An indication of its belonging to the lower stratum is that no weapons were found; otherwise, these graves are relatively rich burials, especially the first five graves discovered in 1994.<sup>96</sup>

Other examples of this type of burial, of the same period and nature, belonging to castle or village dwelling population, are not known. This can be accounted for by the state of the research, in some cases by utterly incomplete documentation and observation.

As regards the geographical distribution, we know of examples of coffin burials only in the only exception being in the cemetery of Zalău–Palvar. Most of the coffin graves in Transylvanian basin were found in South Transylvania, especially in Alba Iulia; six coffin graves in Hunedoara are also worth mentioning. There are only two known sites in North Transylvania; but their importance should not be overemphasised, since the proportion of graves found in South Transylvania is considerably larger.

<sup>94</sup> It should be noted that the arrow head was bent at its tang by 90° degrees.

<sup>95</sup> It is not known where in the grave the bent arrowhead was found. It could not have been shot into the grave, but rather ritually bent. Tettamanti, 1975, 108.

<sup>96</sup> Grave 1: 3 bronze bracelets, crescent shaped bronze earrings of the Köttlach type; grave 3: silver ring with granulated decoration, silver hair ring; grave 5: S shaped hair ring. Cosma, 1994, 323, 3. fig. 1–7.

It is difficult to account for the underrepresentation in Crişana and Banat. There are no examples known in the eastern part of the Eastern Hungarian Plain, otherwise quite rich in sites. This should be treated cautiously, since it is to be feared that many of the sites were not researched in a professional manner.<sup>97</sup> In the present state of research, it is safe to say that there are no examples of coffin burials in this region, without attributing undue importance to this phenomenon.

### III. 2. Other preparation forms

#### III. 2. A. Graves with wooden chambers

Such cases are known only in Staţia de Salvare in Cluj-Napoca, an unpublished cemetery. In his analysis Horia Ciugudeanu who excavated the graves notes that, these were lined with wood. The archaeologist from Alba Iulia called such lining “a wooden chamber”.<sup>98</sup> It is certain that this type of burial is not known in the preceding period, in the 9th century (according to Ciugudeanu); therefore, undoubtedly it is a new phenomenon, dating from the 10th century.

Similar phenomena are documented in other cemeteries, typical of the Conquering Hungarians, for example Zemplin–Malomdomb/Slovakia,<sup>99</sup> as well as in cemeteries of the preceding period from Western Hungary.<sup>100</sup> It is a futile quest, therefore, to look for a single explanation for this custom. The claim that this phenomenon was not widely distributed in the Carpathian basin in the 10th–11th centuries is therefore a safe one.

#### III. 2. B. Plank under the skeleton (pl. 21, 2.)

One skeleton in a horse and weapon burial discovered at Staţia de Salvare in Alba Iulia,<sup>101</sup> and another one in grave 10 in Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street<sup>102</sup> were placed on a wooden plank. This phenomenon is documented in many of the contemporary Hungarian cemeteries: Kenézlő–Fazekaszug, and Bodrogszerdahely.<sup>103</sup> Its relation to the steppe is clear from the burial customs and the finds. At the same time – except for the grave in Alba Iulia (about which no more data are available, and therefore its chronology cannot be established) – the finds from these graves indicate that they undoubtedly belong to contemporary Hungarian dwellers.

### III. 3. Graves with limestone, stone and brick covering, and with brick and stone frame (map 5; appendix I; pl. 6–7; pl. 9: grave 28; pl. 10: graves 29, 39; pl. 12: grave 37; pl. 13: grave 41; pl. 15; pl. 34–35)

Graves with limestone, stone and brick covering can be regarded – in many ways – as the most salient feature of cemeteries dating from the 10th–11th centuries in the region we are studying. Almost thirty years ago, Sarolta Tettamanti wrote “Brick graves in many varieties (my emphasis) occur almost exclusively in churchyards, except for Alba Iulia (no. 389). This is the only place, together with Bata, where bricks dating from the Roman period were found.”<sup>104</sup>

This excellent piece of observation has not been followed up by any studies since. No one has treated the subject nor in the Romanian, nor in the Hungarian, or any other literature. Tettamanti made the mistake of failing to observe that in many cases stone fragments in the graves were found in

<sup>97</sup> It should be noted, that coffin burial is not unknown in the Bihar region, belonging to Hungary: Hajdúdorog-Temetőhegy, -Gyulás. In the region around the middle part of Tisza: Hódmezővásárhely-Szakálhát, Nádudvar-Mihályhalom, Szabadkigyós-Pálliget, Szarvas-Káka, Szentcsanak-Szentlászló, Szentcsanak-Borbásföld. Tettamanti, 1975, 105.

<sup>98</sup> Ciugudeanu, 1996, 4–5.

<sup>99</sup> Budinsky-Krička, Fettich, 1973, pl. 4.

<sup>100</sup> For example Zalakomári– Lesdülő lane /Hungary– grave 144. Szőke, Vándor, 1983, 69–86.

<sup>101</sup> Heitel, 1994–1995, 413.

<sup>102</sup> László, 1944, 572.

<sup>103</sup> László, 1944, 572.

<sup>104</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 95.

association with Roman brick or limestone slab fragments. She did not treat the question, which resulted in her claiming that "...the cemeteries of Cluj-Napoca, Gâmbaş and Sârbogárd were definitely used by Hungarian, or associate Turkish peoples".<sup>105</sup> She goes on to state in her conclusions something that could have been a point of departure for the study of the period:<sup>106</sup> "...the Hungarians may have taken stone covering and the use of other stone structures from foreign burial rites."<sup>107</sup>

No one has studied the stone-limestone-framed burials so far. In the Romanian literature, no one has yet undertaken the task of studying the problem; just claims that "*they must be Romanians, because in these cemeteries there are no horse burials.*"<sup>108</sup> This is characteristic for the treatment of the Hungarian Conquest period in the Romanian literature.<sup>109</sup>

This is the reason why cemeteries in Alba Iulia are mostly unpublished to date, and the quality of illustration in the publications does not meet the requirements of older,<sup>110</sup> let alone recent, archaeology. Consequently, we attempt to analyse phenomena not yet discussed by professional archaeologists.

The graves to be analysed were recovered in the following sites: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 1, 5–6, 14, 17, 18, 25, 28, 29, 30, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 52, 55, 56, 57; Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului, Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare, Alba Iulia–Băile Romanek, Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street, Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 3, Vladimirescu–Șanțuri.

It is mentioned in relation to the graves in Gâmbaş that there were large sandstone slabs positioned at the skull and legs, but these data are not reliable for lack of sufficient documentation.<sup>111</sup> In Cluj-Napoca an unusual type of burial was documented, which differs from the graves in Alba Iulia. It seems that we can attest examples of this type of burials only in the cemeteries of Alba Iulia.

The following groups can be established:

#### **A. Graves with limestone covering:**

**I. Fragments of limestone slabs:** graves 28, 30, 40, 41, 45.

#### **II. Limestone slabs:**

**II 1. One limestone slab** on the grave (perhaps smaller fragments associated with it): Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 17,<sup>112</sup> 29, 57, Alba Iulia – Stația de Salvare.

**II 2. Two limestone slabs** on the grave: graves 18, 38, 43, 44, 52, and 55.<sup>113</sup>

**II 3. Three limestone slabs** on the grave: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 25, 37, 39, 56.

**III. River gravel and a thin layer of limestone** on the grave: graves 5–6.

**IV. Marble slab** on the grave: grave 14.

To these graves from the cemeteries of Alba Iulia – Izvorul Împăratului and Zlatna–Street might be added. Unfortunately they are not published.

#### **Position of limestone slabs and bricks in the grave**

We tried to group the graves in accordance with the position of the limestone slabs or stones:

**1. At the head, legs, pelvis of the skeleton:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 25 and 37, Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare.

**2. Around the skull:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 28, 29, 39, 43.

**3. At the lower part of the skeleton:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 41.

**4. At the head and at the legs:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street. – grave 38.

<sup>105</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 95.

<sup>106</sup> Maybe if not everybody had been regarded as Hungarian along the lines of Béla Szöke's work.

<sup>107</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 112.

<sup>108</sup> A. Dragotă's discussion at the conference in 2002 in Alba Iulia.

<sup>109</sup> It may be noted that no Hungarian researcher or group of researchers, other than István Bóna, who was a devoted researcher of the Conquest Period in Transylvania, exhibited considerable interest for this problem. This explains why sometimes they are ignorant of published data.

<sup>110</sup> Let us refer to the cemetery published by István Kovács 63 years ago.

<sup>111</sup> Bodrogi, 1913, 21.

<sup>112</sup> Size: 1.85 × 1.40 × 0.30 m.

<sup>113</sup> Length: 135 cm; Width: 50 cm.; Breadth: 28 cm.

**5. All over the grave:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 5–6, 17, 44 and 45, Alba Iulia – Stația de Salvare.

Unfortunately the results of the unpublished excavations could not be included in this study, therefore data from the other cemeteries in Alba Iulia are missing (Izvorul Împăratului, Vânătorilor Street, Stația de Salvare, Zlatna-Street).

**B. Graves lined with fragments of limestone slabs dating from the Roman period and graves with stone covering:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei – 1 grave, Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare.

**C. Grave-pits lined with limestone slabs and stones:** Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului and Vânătorilor Street, Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 3. We do not know the position of the stones and limestone slabs in the graves in Alba Iulia, but the grave in Cluj-Napoca is well documented by Kovács “The grave-pit, especially at the head and at the left-hand side, was lined with large pebble stones.”<sup>114</sup>

**D. Grave with brick-frame:** Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare, Vladimirescu–Șanțuri.

**The main characteristics (sex of the interred, geographical distribution, the archaeological context and the relative chronology) of the graves with stone and brick covering**

One noticeable characteristic of graves with stone covering is the frequency of the orientations other than W-E. Thus most burials from the cemetery in Brândușei Street, Alba Iulia, had an E-W orientation. E-W and NE-SW orientation is known in the following graves with stone covering: graves 5–6, 14, 25, 29, 30, 41, 43, 44, 52, 56 (in the rest the orientation is W-E, SW-NE or NW-SE). Nine out of the 21 graves with stone covering had another orientation than W-E orientated, which is 42.63% percent of the total. The connection between these two phenomena is obvious, although by no means universal. It is important to note that some of the graves with another orientation than W-E, 12 to be exact, were not covered with stones or bricks (13, 16, 21, 22, 24, 27, 33, 35, 46, 49, 53, 54). Seven graves with brick covering were W-E orientated, which means that these customs are mixed, and it is impossible to pinpoint a governing principle. The only tenable conclusion may be that these customs were not known in horse and weapon burials.

We have no data on the orientation of the graves with stone covering occurring in the other cemeteries in Alba Iulia, but there were graves with E-W orientation found in all the cemeteries mentioned above. At the Izvorul Împăratului three graves had such an orientation, at Stația de Salvare the SE-NW orientation is known, in a small proportion. We have no information on the connection between the above-mentioned burial customs in these cemeteries. The only orientation occurring in the Vânătorilor Street cemetery, dating from the 11th century, is W-E. We have no information on the number of simultaneous occurrences of these two customs in these graves.<sup>115</sup>

Another characteristic, which marks the group as unique, is its geographical distribution. In the region, graves with stone covering are documented only in Alba Iulia, except for a group of graves with brick-frame, documented in the site of Vladimirescu–Șanțuri, dating from the 11th century. On the grounds of its geographical distribution and chronology, this group belongs to the same type as the burials discovered in the Hungarian Plain, for which Ildikó Katalin Papp provided an excellent analysis.<sup>116</sup> The graves from Gâmbaș, mentioned above, are to be treated with caution, since we have only little information about the presence of limestone, not backed by any documentation.

The privileged, almost unique status of Alba Iulia cannot be explained by the significant amount of stone or limestone ruins of buildings in the two towns of Apulum built during Roman times, which were readily used for burials. In the case of the horse burials discovered in these cemeteries such customs were not practised. Not to mention the situation in Napoca, another Roman town of considerable importance (likewise with many ruins) where in the cemeteries dating from the Conquest period and characterised by horse and weapon burials, situated next to Roman cemeteries, this custom was unknown. The pit of grave 3 in Zápolya-Street was lined with small pebble stones.

<sup>114</sup> Kovács I., 1942, 92.

<sup>115</sup> CCArh, 2002, 33; Blăjan, Stoicovici, Botezatu, 1988–1990, 273; Ciugudeanu, 1996, 5–8.

<sup>116</sup> Papp, 2002, 177–194.

In the absence of anthropological analyses, there is no telling whether this custom is characteristic of woman or man burials. In grave 55, a woman was buried, and in graves 14, 30, 39 and 56 children were buried. The sex assessment and its distribution in the rest of the graves still remain unsolved. Some skeletons lend themselves to the conclusion that they were men: in grave 17 and 57 with stone covering the length of the skeletons was 190 and 186 centimetres, respectively, which suggests that men were buried in these graves.

As to their position in the cemetery, we cannot draw general conclusions, since only parts of the cemetery are excavated. The graves with stone covering in the part of the cemetery that was excavated in 1997 do not form a group. But the following graves with stone covering do: 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45; these are separated from a similar row of graves by another row where there was no stone covering on the graves; in the former row graves without stone covering were found as well (25, 28–30 43–44). The graves excavated in 1999 belong to this last group.

The frequent occurrence of the graves with stone covering in the Brândușei Street cemetery (21 out of the 57 graves, *i.e.*, 36.84% of the total) calls for the interpretation of this custom as the most salient characteristic of the cemeteries in Alba Iulia; and therefore an attempt should be made to explain the cultural links of this custom.

We have no exact information on its presence in other cemeteries of Alba Iulia. According to preliminary accounts, their number must have been considerable. The proportion of graves with stone or brick covering or frame amounts to a purported 35% in the cemetery at Stația de Salvare. Taking the total to be 1,300 graves, this means that 466 graves with stone or brick covering or frame are known in the largest Transylvanian cemetery dating from the Early Middle Ages. There are no data available on their distribution. The proportion may be similar in the cemetery in Vânătorilor Street, and there are graves of this type at the burial site at Izvorul Împăratului as well.<sup>117</sup>

Their concentration in sites in Alba Iulia raises a question no one has yet been able to answer. The difference from other cemeteries in Transylvania is more than obvious, and at the same time, they differ markedly from the burial customs of horse and weapon burials recovered at Stația de Salvare.

The furnishings of the graves with stone covering discovered in the Brândușei Street cemetery is scanty, however the same goes for the other graves. A typical artefact is the plain hair ring (6, 38, 40, 52, and 55). Other artefacts, such as pearls (55), button (41), knife (6), fire-lighting implements (6), arrowhead (6), flint (6), and wire bracelet (55), rattle (55), are rare. In some cases food storage ritual vessels were found (14, 29, 55), and egg shells (17). We may infer from the proportion of food interred that such a community was not rich, a situation indicated by the fact that 9 out of 19 graves with stone or brick covering did not contain any kind of goods or equipment, that is 47.36% of the total. The only known silver jewellery, a hair ring, was found in grave 40. The other pieces of jewellery in the Brândușei Street cemetery were made of bronze (bronze hair ring: graves 6, 38, 52, 55; bronze button: grave 41; bronze rattle: grave 55; bronze wire bracelet: grave 55); iron artefacts are known from grave 6. A similar situation can be noted in other cemeteries. The finds at Izvorul Împăratului seem scanty as well.

The graves discovered at Băile Romane and Vânătorilor Street are typical of the 11th century, judging from the simpler, that is conforming more to Christianity, customs; S-shaped hair rings and coins were found in great abundance in the graves. These cemeteries are not poorer than other cemeteries in the Carpathian basin dating from the 11th century.

<sup>117</sup> Ciugudeanu writes: “b. morminte acoperite cu bucăți de piatră și tegule romane, așezate în 1–2 rânduri suprapuse, uneori chiar cu fragmente arhitecturale de dimensiuni apreciabile” (cca. 35%) (graves covered with stone, and Roman marble slabs, reasonably large in cases (approx. 35%). Later: “se constată diversificarea tipurilor de morminte...apărând morminte acoperite cu un strat de pietre și fragmente de cărămizi...” (the types are more diverse...graves with stone or brick covering appear). Blăjan-Stoicovici-Botezatu writes: “...a două grupe de morminte:...b. cu amenajări de pietre în jurul scheletului” (two groups of graves: ...b. the skeleton was contoured with stones). According to Blăjan: “...sau înconjurat cu un patruleter ridicat din cărămizi fragmentare și bolovani de calcar refolosite” (a square shape with stone or brick frame, built of fragments of bricks and reused limestone slabs). Ciugudeanu, 1996, 8; Blăjan, Stoicovici, Botezatu, 1990–1993, 273; CCArh., 2002, 33.

The cemetery at Stația de Salvare displays completely different characteristics. We have good reasons, other than the relative wide range and abundance of artefacts in the graves,<sup>118</sup> to assume the presence of another population, on the grounds of burial customs. There are horse and weapon burials apart from burials with stone or brick covering and frame, amounting to fifty in number.<sup>119</sup> Based on this, we may attribute a different style to the cemetery at Stația de Salvare, as opposed to other cemeteries in the same town, dating from the 10th–11th centuries. Horse and weapon burials were found in other parts of Alba Iulia. In the SW part of Cetate, at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, two horse burials were discovered in two places (one in 1984, the other in 2002). These sites contribute to the complex and heterogeneous image of burial customs in the 10th century.

An exact chronology regarding the graves with stone covering and stone and brick frame cannot be established, again, because they are not published. The fact that either only parts of the cemetery (Brândușei Street, Izvorul Împăratului) were excavated, which makes impossible the determination of its beginning and of its end, or that they are unpublished, makes an analysis impossible.

It is clear from the finds that the Brândușei Street cemetery was used in the 10th century, and that the part discovered in 1997 may be dated to the second half of the century.<sup>120</sup> The finds from the later recovered parts (1999, 2001) can be dated anywhere in the 10th century; an exception is probably the spiral twisted band-ring, dated to the second half of the century.<sup>121</sup> In the graves discovered in this part of the cemetery burials with stone or brick frame are unknown, only graves with stone or brick covering.

The cemetery at Stația de Salvare can be dated to the same period, to the middle of the 10th century.<sup>122</sup> The 22 graves from Izvorul Împăratului can be dated to the second half of the 10th century.<sup>123</sup>

The graves found at Băile Romane and Vânătorilor Street are unquestionably later.<sup>124</sup> Only graves with brick/stone frame were found at Vânătorilor Street (plain graves, with stone covering only, are unknown from this burial site). Not much is known about the 35 graves found at Băile Romane; Tettamanti's claim to classify them with "brick graves" is unjustified.<sup>125</sup>

The insufficient amount of data does not allow us to claim that this distinction is the reflection of ethnic or social differences, or of a chronological dichotomy between a primitive, simple grave style with stone/brick covering and burials with stone/brick frame, which requires more effort.<sup>126</sup> It seems, if tentatively, that the earliest graves are those of Brândușei Street, followed by Alba Iulia – Stația de Salvare, and Izvorul Împăratului. The cemetery in Vânătorilor Street is unquestionably from the 11th century. Graves with stone covering were not found here, only with brick frame, and E-W, N-S, S-N orientations are unknown. Graves discovered at Băile Romane are dated to a later period, although there is no substantiating evidence on this.

My point is that these cemeteries can be dated unquestionably to the 10th century, and the population that used them was in contact with (if not subject of!) a major power, a consequence of the political and military realignment taking place at the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries, caused by the Hungarian Conquest.

<sup>118</sup> Apart from golden hair rings (4 known specimens), various strings of beads, silver earrings with grape bunch and four bead pendants, silver hair rings, bracelets and a great number of rings are worth mentioning.

<sup>119</sup> Information graciously offered by Radu Harhoiu. Arrowheads and quivers were found in 47 graves, bow bones in 12, axes in 3. Horse burial is known from at least 8, probably from 18 graves.

<sup>120</sup> Spiral twisted band-ring, closed wire ring, notched wire ring. Gáll, 2004 (ms).

<sup>121</sup> Its golden variants found in Gotland are dated to the middle of the century. Lit.: Mesterházy, 1993, 458.

<sup>122</sup> Twisted wire torque, S shaped hair rings, twisted wire rings, twisted wire bracelets, earring with four beads, granulated cast earring with grape bunch pendant. For a description see: Gáll, 2004 (ms).

<sup>123</sup> Twisted torque, bronze breast cross.

<sup>124</sup> In the case of Baia Romană a later dating is justified by S shaped hair rings, twisted torques; the graves at Vânătorilor Street are dated by oboli from the 11th century.

<sup>125</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 95.

<sup>126</sup> Graves with niches, with stone/brick frame are known from the cemetery part at Stația de Salvare, belonging to the 9th century, are unparalleled in cemeteries dating from the 10th century. Similar graves, however, are known from the Lower Danube region, e.g., from Sultana. Mitrea, 1988, plate 5, plate 6, plate 12.

## Parallels

Graves with stone/brick covering/frame are known from other regions as well. Spatial, chronological and historical information lead us to examine the cemeteries of the Lower Danube region. Our inquiry was influenced by the observation that the practice of stone covering and of orientations other than W-E in the graves in the Lower Danube region was in positive correlation.

The cemeteries recovered at the Lower Danube, dated mostly to the 6th–9th centuries, but also later in the 10th century, are biritual; these are considered by a well-known German archaeologist to be proto-Bulgarian and Slav.<sup>127</sup>

Many graves with stone covering were found in the biritual cemetery of *Histria–Capul Viilor* in Dobruja.<sup>128</sup> 17 of the inhumation burials can be classified as having stone/brick covering/frame (18, 25, 31, 33, 79, 89, 92, 101, 132, 152, 192, 210, 214, 220, 249, 252, and 256). Most of them are graves with stone covering (18, 31, 33, 79, 89, 92, 101, 132, 192, 214, 220, 256), but some have stone/brick frame (25, 210, 249, 252), there is one with stone covering and frame (152). These graves have N-S orientation (graves 18, 31, 33, 79, 220), or its variants: NW-SE (grave 192), or NNW-SSE (grave 256). An appreciable fraction of the graves are E-W orientated, among them 6 with stone covering and frame (25, 89, 101, 132, 152, 214). Two graves with W-E orientation have stone covering (210, 249). It is to be noted that non W-E orientation and stone/brick covering/frame are closely correlated.

In the cemetery Devnja 1/Bulgaria, a significant number of graves have stone covering, or stone/brick frame.<sup>129</sup> 39 of the 53 inhumation burials have stone/brick covering/frame (graves 2, 4, 10, 13, 14, 17, 21, 22, 24a–b, 26, 27, 29, 40, 43, 46, 47, 48a, 50, 52–53, 59, 65–66, 67–70, 72, 73–75, 77, 83, 86, 88–92), most of them have stone covering. In one case a sidewall niche was lined with stone (grave 91). Similarly to the cemetery of Histria, here the graves are diversely orientated. Most of them have N-S orientation (2, 4, 10, 13, 14, 17, 22, 24b, 26, 28, 40, 43, 46, 47, 48a, 49, 50, 52, 53, 59, 67–70, 72, 74–75, 77, 83, 86, 88–92), but S-N (21, 27), and E-W occur as well (24a, 73), and one grave is undocumented (65). We may presume that the W-E orientation, that would become universal later on, is unknown in the necropolis of Devnja.

Graves with stone/brick covering show a greater variety in cemetery Devnja 3,<sup>130</sup> although their occurrence is less frequent. We can find some sort of stone/brick construction in 21 of the 85 inhumation burials (graves 5, 25, 30, 36, 39, 53, 57, 67, 69, 71–72, 76, 83, 90, 93, 101, 105, 111, 123, 132, 155). Yet, as I have already pointed out, the range of variety is wider in the 17 graves with stone/brick construction. In graves 30, 67 and 105 stone coffins, in grave 76 brick boxes, in grave 123 stone covering and brick frame, in grave 132 brick covering occur. Grave 131, a child's burial, is of interest here; its sides were lined with brick, but also it was covered with stone. The rest, proportionally the significant part, were simple graves with stone covering; in grave 67 stone coffin and covering were documented by the excavators.

There is a wide variety of grave orientations in this cemetery. The main type is still N-S (graves 5, 25, 30, 36, 39, 53, 57, 69, 72, 93, 101, 108, 111). As opposed to Devnja 1, discussed above, the W-E orientation is known here in seven instances (graves 67, 76, 105, 123, 131, 132, 155), quite frequently in comparison with others; one grave is S-N oriented (90). There are no data on the orientation in one case (grave 71). I would like to point out that graves with brick covering/boxes and coffins have an W-E orientation, and they belong to the same group with those that have W-E orientation and coffins as their main characteristics (graves 112, 113, 114, 116, 119, and graves 151, 159–160). In our opinion, as far as burial customs are concerned, there is a marked difference between with N-S orientation and stone covering (S-N in one case) and the type with W-E orientation and brick boxes, and coffins.

The graves with stone/brick covering/frame in *Sultana* are less in number (50, 52, 95).<sup>131</sup> These have an W-E orientation, as do the vast majority of the graves in the cemetery. This is an important piece of information, since, as shown above, in the region south of the Danube an appreciable fraction of the

<sup>127</sup> Fiedler U., 1992, 151.

<sup>128</sup> Zirra, 1957, 69–76; Zirra, 1959, 311–317; Zirra, 1963, 355–412.

<sup>129</sup> Dimitrov, 1971, 57–76.

<sup>130</sup> Dimitrov, 1972, 45–65.

<sup>131</sup> Mitrea, 1988, pl. 5, pl. 6, pl. 12.

graves with some kind of stone/brick construction has an orientation different from W-E. In the above mentioned cemetery, the N-S burials are under-represented, and in one instance, the orientation was E-W, but these graves do not contain stone/brick construction of any kind.

The above concerned inhumation burial with stone/brick covering and frame. There are, however, cremation burials as well, also with stone frame, brick frame or stone covering. There are examples in all the biritual cemeteries of the Lower Danube region: Histria, Devnja – 1–3, and Sultana. Graves with brick frame/covering only occur in cremation burials in the cemetery of Varna (stone/brick covering/frame does not occur in the 17 inhumation burials).<sup>132</sup> In the cemetery of Razdelna, which contained only inhumation burials, graves that have stone/covering, and especially frame, are high in number.<sup>133</sup>

Stone covering or the lining of the pit with stones is known in the NW Balkans, graves found at Ptuj should serve as examples.<sup>134</sup>

Burials with brick frame in the Balkans occur later (in parallel with those in the Carpathian basin), in the 11th–12th centuries. Examples are the burials framed brick fragments in grave 105 in Kocsani–Crkviste and in grave 31 in Vitolište, both from Macedonia.<sup>135</sup> Here no burials with stone/brick covering can be found.

We have abundant data on burials with stone/brick covering/frame from the western part of the Carpathian basin. In *Western Hungary*, graves with niche dating from the 8th–9th centuries were found on the Zalakomár–Lesdülő/Hungary; graves with stone covering are missing.<sup>136</sup> In an unpublished male niche burial, the cremated remains of another person were deposited along with the interred, which may be yet another evidence of Slav spousal sacrifice. Stone covering was used in the cemetery of Sopron–Présháztelep dating from the 9th century (graves 7, 10)<sup>137</sup>, and in Zalavár/Hungary, dated to the middle of the 9th–10th centuries.<sup>138</sup> Again, graves have stone covering in the cemetery of Keszthely–Fenekpuszta/Hungary dating from the 9th–10th centuries: graves 50, 55, 56, 57, 60, 62, 72.<sup>139</sup> Burials at Krungl are to be noted here. Further north there are scores of burials with stone/brick covering/frame as attested by Hruby: beside the finds of Stare–Mesto, those of Nové Dídiny, Uh. Brodč, Libici, and Malenovice, etc./Czech Republic are known.<sup>140</sup> Burials with stone covering are documented in further parts of the Czech Republic; the excavator and publisher of such graves at Radetice dated them to the second half of the 10th and the first half of the 11th centuries.<sup>141</sup> Similar cemeteries are known in Poland as well. In the Końskie cemetery where 170 graves were found, women were buried in W-E orientation, while men E-W. The majority of the graves were framed by stones, the others were with stone covering and stone frame.

The orientation of the graves recovered in these sites is W-E, as opposed to the graves with stone covering in Transylvania and in the Lower Danube region, some of which are E-W orientated, similarly to some of the graves in the cemeteries in question.

The following may be observed and concluded:

I. In the region under study in the 10th–11th centuries graves with stone/brick covering occur only in the cemeteries of Alba Iulia. In the only fully published cemetery,<sup>142</sup> that of Brândușei Street, 21 graves of the 57 had stone/brick covering, which is 36.84% of the total. Stația de Salvare, with its 35%,

<sup>132</sup> Dimitrov, 1974, 51–94.

<sup>133</sup> Dimitrov, 1978, 120–152.

<sup>134</sup> E.g., graves 271, 291, 303 are of note. Korošec, 1950, pl. 2–4.

<sup>135</sup> Maneva D, 1992, 10, fig. 15.

<sup>136</sup> Szőke, 1983.

<sup>137</sup> Tomka, 1969, 68.

<sup>138</sup> Cs. Sós, Bökönyi, 1963, 87, 159.

<sup>139</sup> Cs. Sós, 1961, 278, figs. 4–9.

<sup>140</sup> E.g.: Stare–Mesto – graves 3, 113. Hruby, 1955, figs. 7, 9, 12.

<sup>141</sup> An S-shaped hair ring found in grave XX is noteworthy from the point of view of its dating. Olmerová, 1959, 227–254.

<sup>142</sup> To be exact, the last 10 graves are unpublished, but thanks to the friendship of A. Dragotă we are acquainted with the phenomena and finds of the graves.

deserves a note; all this means that concentration of graves on this scale is unparalleled in the Carpathian basin of the 10th–11th centuries. The pit in grave 3 in Cluj-Napoca was lined with stones; therefore, it cannot be classified in this group.

2. Burials with stone/brick frame are known in Alba Iulia (Alba Iulia – Stația de Salvare), they also occur in the Hungarian Plain later. The burials at Vladimirescu should be classified along with the similar finds of the Hungarian Plain.

3. Burials with stone/brick covering are not known in the present state of research from typically Conquest Period cemeteries that have horse and weapon burials. We deem it important to note here that there were horse and weapon burials in the same cemetery as graves with stone covering in the Stația de Salvare cemetery in Alba Iulia, yet these burial customs do not occur together in the same grave. My claim is that this is sufficient basis to exclude the population practising these customs from the “middle stratum of the Hungarian status continuum”.

4. Graves with stone/brick covering occur in cemeteries where orientation does not conform to a single tradition. The bodies were placed in the graves pointing to different directions, beside W-E; there are graves E-W, N-S, and S-N oriented. These orientations are unknown in cemeteries with horse-weapon burials. The only grave with horse-weapon burial and S-N orientation was found in Aspres Le Corps, in France, but this is far too remote and dubious; in fact, we believe that this is an exception that proves the rule: it would be more logical to surmise that the burials with another orientation than W-E are the legacy of another population.

5. There are precursors to the tradition of stone/brick covering dating from the 10th century, in the western and northern parts of the Carpathian basin, more significantly in the Lower Danube region studied above. In our opinion, with the characteristics (especially the proportion of non W-E orientation) of the cemeteries of the Lower Danube region in view, the burials with stone covering in Transylvania point southwards.

It is thoroughly justified to pose the question of who this population is, burying their dead with a different orientation and under stone covering. In this region, as attested by written sources, a *Slav* population lived in the 8th–11th centuries, a fact corroborated by the evidence of stone/brick covering/frame occurring in graves with urned and unurned cremation<sup>143</sup> from the biritual cemeteries of the Lower Danube region. In his monograph, U. Fiedler makes a clear distinction between cremation and inhumation burials: the former are Slav, the latter are proto-Bulgarian.<sup>144</sup> He was not interested in burial customs, in the different distribution of orientation within the cemeteries and he was not looking for the solution to the problem of burials with stone/brick covering. We do not intend to solve this problem here. Yet, I would like to give an example to illustrate that Fiedler's simplification (Slavs – cremation burials; proto-Bulgarians – inhumation burials) does not hold: 319 of the 344 inhumation burials in Izvoru have a W-E orientation, there are no graves with stone/brick covering, but burial of animal parts as provisions. The cemetery Devnja 1 is the exact opposite as to its rites: out of the 53 graves 39 have stone/brick covering/frame (but mostly stone covering), and 35 burials have a N-S orientation. The W-E orientation is not known from this cemetery. These two contrasting cases (in Izvoru the N-S orientation type is under-represented and stone covering is unknown, unlike in cemetery Devnja 1, where graves with N-S orientation constitute 66.66% of the inhumation burials, and 73.58% of them have stone covering) clearly demonstrate that the distinction of cemeteries on the basis of their rites only (cremation-inhumation) is in itself insufficient. Judging their ethnic identity solely on this basis is even more misleading.

6. In view of the facts shown above, the population of the cemeteries excavated in Alba Iulia was not conquering the Hungarian. The question remains: how did the population of these cemeteries settle around Alba Iulia? The distributional and chronological parallels of their burial customs can be traced

<sup>143</sup> It is common knowledge that the Slavs cremated their dead before adopting Christianity.

<sup>144</sup> Fiedler, 1992.

back to the region of the Lower Danube, and are clearly distinct from customs observed in classical Conquest Period burials dating from the 10th century.

7. We may perhaps – from the standpoint of our theme of investigation – ignore the circumstances of the settlement of this population in Transylvania. The aim of our study is to classify burial customs, to establish distinct groups of graves based on these customs. In this way we hope to prove archaeologically the existence of the population preceding the Hungarian Conquest. *The living together, the mixing between populations with two sets of cultural traditions* cannot be excluded; it is, however, difficult to substantiate it with archaeological data. For example, the existence of two groups with different traditions (the typical weapon and horse burials and the group of graves with stone covering and another orientation than W-E) hints – if vaguely – at living together, and after a time, mixing.

As to clothing accessories, we may mention the phenomenon well known from the cemeteries of the Lower Danube region: according to their excavator, in the graves of Alba Iulia – Stația de Salvare, quite frequently four or eight plain hair rings were found with the interred. The same phenomenon is documented in the Brândușei Street cemetery. From grave 3 six hair rings were recovered, from grave 7 four, 4 from grave 27 and 4 from grave 55.<sup>145</sup> This custom is unknown in classical Conquest Period cemeteries dating from the first half of the century.

8. It may be concluded that burials with stone/brick covering were the practice of a population other than that of the conquerors. To the question, whether or not the new conquering population coming from East in the 10th century adopted the tradition of burials with stone/brick covering (which is alien to a weapon-bearing and horse-riding people), the answer, based on archaeological evidence, is negative.<sup>146</sup> This burial custom did not originate from an eastern, conquering Hungarian population.

### III. 4. Burial headrests (map 5)

#### III. 4. 1. Stone-brick underneath the head (pl. 8: grave 25; pl. 21 grave 4)

Probably the greatest mystery of the burial customs of the Conquest Period in Transylvania is that of the stones underneath the head (as a pillow?). According to Gy. László this is typical of the conquerors (instead of a saddle)<sup>147</sup>, later G. Vékony thought it to be of the Kabars.<sup>148</sup> The problem is more complicated, on more than one level.

As mentioned above, this custom was known only in Transylvania, documented in Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Stree – grave 4, and Blandiana–“B” cemetery –grave 11.<sup>149</sup> Similarly, a *brick* was used to support the head in Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 25.<sup>150</sup>

In two out of these three cases the men were interred with their weapon, a sabre (Cluj-Napoca, Blandiana), the third was found without any funerary equipment, but its orientation was E-W. This is no sufficient basis to establish the origin of this custom. Similar finds in the cemetery of Ciurbrud connect it with those previously mentioned. There was a stone found underneath the head of the interred in graves 1 and 6 in this cemetery dating from the 9th century.<sup>151</sup> It seems plausible therefore that the Hungarians adopted the custom; nevertheless, it may have been used simultaneously by different populations. There

<sup>145</sup> The orientation of grave 3 is W-E, with a plain iron torque. Grave 7 is also W-E oriented, with four hair rings and a knife. Grave 27, a child burial is with inverse, that is E-W orientation, had 4 hair rings. Grave 55 has stone covering, W-E orientation; apart from its four hair rings, other items are: vessel, rattle, wire bracelet, beads.

<sup>146</sup> It is certain that horse and weapon burials and burials with stone/brick covering are in complementary distribution.

<sup>147</sup> László, 1997, 350.

<sup>148</sup> Vékony, 1988, 123.

<sup>149</sup> Kovács I., 1942, 92–97.; Horedt, 1966, 282, 19 pls. 11, 23, 1–10.

<sup>150</sup> Dragotă, Brânda, 2000, 294, grave 1, fig IV.

<sup>151</sup> Dankanits, Ferenczi, 1959, 605–612.

are graves in Zalavár in which the head of the interred was supported with a brick.<sup>152</sup> There are parallels in Moravia as well, in Stare Mesto<sup>153</sup>.

The question is far from being sufficiently investigated, yet it may be surmised that this rite is related to the type of burials with stone structure, although the custom of using a headrest was definitely also known among the Hungarian conquerors.

### *III. 4. 2. Skull supported by animal skull*

In one case, the head was found supported by animal bones in Sălacea – grave 4b in Crișana.<sup>154</sup> It seems certain that this was a head rest.

### *III. 4. 3. Skull on organic material*

The skull in grave 9 in Timișoara–Cioreni was probably placed on organic material.<sup>155</sup> There are scores of graves of this type, described and analysed 30 years ago by S. Tettamanti.<sup>156</sup>

## **IV. The position of the skeleton**

### *IV. 1. The position of the arms*

When examining the position of the arms one must take into consideration phenomena that are not related to the interment of the body (including the arm-bones), such as the decomposition of the body. Based on existing documentation, arm-bone positions can be classified into 18 subgroups, which may then be re-classified into six main groups.

**Position I:** arms are stretched. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 1, 6, 8, 12, 16, 21, 25, 29, 30, 35, 36, 40–42, 44; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare (numbers of the graves unknown); Alba Iulia–Pâclișă – grave 3, Vârșand–Laposhalom – graves 1, 3, 4, 5, 16, 32, 38, 49, 55, 56; Hodoni–Pociroane – graves 1, 3; Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street –grave 25; Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya: graves 2 and 4; Gâmbaș–Magura – graves 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 (A), 11(B), 12 (C); Blandiana–“B” cemetery – graves 2 and 4; Salonta – grave 2; Oradea–“În Vii” –graves 1–6, Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises; Dudeștii Vechi–VI mound, Hunca Mare; Șirioara–Podirei –grave 74; Șiclău–Gropoiaie – graves 1, 11–12; Sălacea – grave 4 A-B,<sup>157</sup> Orăștie – Dealul Pemilor – grave 3; Dumbrăvița – graves 1–3; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 19; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy–I-III, graves 6, 15, 45; Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár garden – grave 12; Voiteni – graves 1–5; Zalău–Palvar – graves 3–6, 4.

**Position II:** the right arm is stretched, the left arm flexed at 90°: Vârșand–Laposhalom – graves 2, 12, 34, 36, 37, 42, 58; Blandiana “B” – grave 11; Șiclău – graves 5–6; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave “L”.

**Position III:** the left arm is stretched, the right arm flexed at 90°. Cases: Alba Iulia – Brândușei Street – grave 34; Vârșand–Laposhalom – graves 18, 27, 31, 39, 45, 52; Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 2; Șiclău – grave 2; Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár vineyard – grave 6.

**Position IV:** both arms flexed at 10–20°, the hands resting on the rim of the pelvis. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 43; Dudeștii Vechi – Dragomir mound – grave 2.

<sup>152</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 96.

<sup>153</sup> Hruby, 1955, 7 fig. V.1, 9.

<sup>154</sup> Chidioșan, 1969, 611–616.

<sup>155</sup> Radulescu, Gáll, 2001, 169, 20, fig. 1.

<sup>156</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 90.

<sup>157</sup> It should be noted that the right and left hands of the adjacent bodies were folded; perhaps as an indication of intimacy.

**Position V:** the right arm is stretched the left arm flexed at 45°, the hand probably resting on the other arm. Sites: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 16, 19, 24, 37, 57; Vărșand–Laposhalom – graves 7, 9, 11, 33, 43, 46, 51; Tărian – graves 20; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 5; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 37.

**Position VI:** the left arm is stretched, the right arm flexed at 45°, the hand resting on pelvis or on the other arm. Cases: Vărșand–Laposhalom – graves 52, 53; Blandiana “B” – grave 5; Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – grave 32; Șiclău – grave 10; Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – grave 6; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave “J”; grave 18; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 41.

**Position VII:** both hands resting on the clavicle or on each other, the arms flexed approx. at 22–45°. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 13, 47; Hodoni–Pocioroane – graves 6, 16; Blandiana “B” – grave 1; Șirioara–Podirei – grave 2; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 3.

**Position VIII:** the right hand resting on sternum, the arm flexed at 45°, the left hand resting on pelvis, the arm flexed at 90°. Sites: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 18; Vărșand–Laposhalom – grave 21; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 9; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 36.

**Position IX:** the right hand resting on pelvis, arm flexed at 45°, the left arm flexed at 90°, the hand resting on pelvis. Sites: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 47; Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – grave 9.

**Position X:** the right hand resting on pelvis, arm flexed at 45°, the left hand resting on the sternum, the arm flexed at 45°. Cases: Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – grave 8; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 5.

**Position XI:** The right hand resting on sternum/clavicle, the left arm is stretched. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 5, 55; Hodoni–Pocioroane – grave 4.

**Position XII:** the right arm is stretched, the left arm flexed, the hand resting on sternum. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 28, 46; Alba Iulia–Pâclișa – grave 2.

**Position XIII:** hands folded or resting on the pelvis. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 38, 48, 51; Șeitin – graves 1, 4; Șiclău – grave 9; Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – grave 1; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 7; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 19–20, 23.

**Position XIV:** arms crossed over lumbar vertebrae or sacrum, or hands folded or left unfolded, or one resting over the other. Cases: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 3, 4, 15, 20, 32, 52; Vărșand–Laposhalom – graves 2, 7, 15, 20, 23, 28, 29, 30, 41, 54, 57; Hodoni–Pocioroane – graves 4, 7, 8, 10; Moftinu Mic–Messzelátó domb – grave 4; Salonta – grave 1; Șiclău – grave 7; Sălacea – grave 2; Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – grave 7; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave “M”, grave 1; Zalău–Palvar – grave 9; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 2–3, 14, 16 A, 24–29, 31–36, 38–40, 43, 49, 51, 54; Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár vineyard – graves 1–4, 13, 18–21, 23, 29–31, 33–36, 38–44, 48, 53, 55–56.

**Position XV:** the right arm flexed at 90° at the elbow, the left arm flexed at 45°, the hand resting on pelvis. Cases: Hodoni–Pocioroane – graves 13, 14; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 4; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 11, 13, 22.

**Position XVI:** the right arm flexed at 90° at the elbow, the left arm flexed and the hand resting on clavicle. Cases: Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 6.

**Position XVII:** the right arm are stretched and the left arm flexed very little: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 6; Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – grave 3; Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – grave 1; Voiteni – grave 6.

**Position XVIII:** the right arm are stretched and the right arm flexed very little: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – graves 5 and 7; Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – grave 21; Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – graves 3 and 4.

In some cases only one arm was preserved. These cases cannot be classified into any of the groups:

1. Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 10: the right arm is stretched, and flexed at approx. 30°.
2. Hodoni – grave 17: the left arm-bone is stretched, the right is missing.

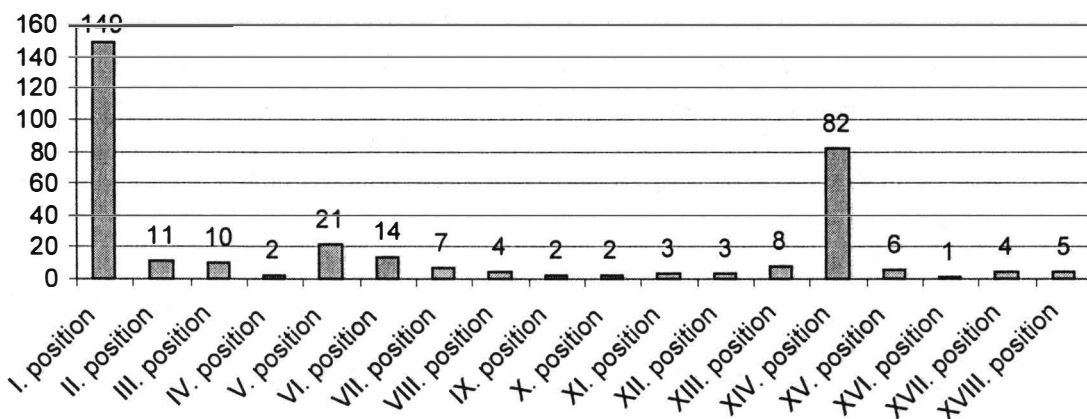


Figure 7

### 3. Moldovenești-Jósika Aladár garden – grave 11.

In the cemeteries under study, there are 18 distinguishable arm positions, with unevenly high representation of positions I. and XIV.

In an attempt to simplify the classification of these arm positions, the following groups were established.

To group I belong arm positions I, IV, XVII, and XVIII. This group then comprises the cases where the arms are stretched, and where for a set of reasons the forearm bones came to be resting on the pelvis. One such reason may have been the wrapping of a body in a shroud or the process of decomposition. This group comprises the majority of the cases. 160 cases out of a total of 300 from 27 sites belong here, which is 80.13% of the documented arm positions.

To group II belong arm position II, III, IX and XV. In these cases, one arm was stretched, the other was resting on the stomach, and *i.e.*, it was flexed at the elbow at 90°. There are 29 known cases from six sites, which is 9.73 % of the total.

In the cases belonging to group III either one or both of the arms were resting on the chest. The cases of sub-groups VII–VIII, X–XII and XVI belong here. There are 20 instances known from nine sites, comprising 6.71% of the documented arm positions.

In group IV belongs arm position XIV, where the arms were resting crossed on the lumbar vertebrae or the sacrum, or were found folded. This group comprises those cases as well where one arm was stretched; the other was flexed at 45° with the hand resting on the pelvis, pointing towards the other arm, even folded with it in cases. 80 instances are documented from 12 sites, comprising 26.84% of the total of the arm positions.

In group V belongs arm position XIII, with 11 cases from five sites, which is 3.69% of the total.

As the graph shows, it is evident that group I is the best represented (53.02%), burials belonging to the rest of the groups are less in number. There are 115 cases known from Transylvania, 27 from Crișana and 18 from Banat (74 of Transylvanian burials are known from the unpublished cemetery of Șirioara).

Burials belonging to groups II–V were recovered from a strictly limited number of sites. These are mostly from Transylvania (Blandiana “B”, Moldovenești, Alba Iulia–Brândușei, Alba Iulia–Pâcliș, Orăștie, Hunedoara, Moldovenești, Șirioara), two sites are in Banat (Hodoni–Pocioroane, Timișoara–Cioreni), and four in Crișana (Vârșand–Laposhalom, Siclău–Gropoai, Salonta–Testhalom, Zalău–Palvar). As to the distribution of the groups, in Crișana group II was the most highly represented, the burials of group IV (either of the forearm bones was resting on the stomach, flexed at 90°) on the other hand were concentrated in Transylvania (group II: Crișana–16, Banat–4, Transylvania–6; group III.: Crișana–1, Banat–6, Transylvania–12; group IV: Crișana–16, Banat–6, Transylvania–58; group V: Crișana–3, Banat–1, Transylvania–7). It is evident that more cases are known from Transylvania than from Banat, but this is clearly due to the present state of research.

It is clear from the present state of research that the arm positions of group I. overweigh those belonging to the other groups in the studied burials dating from the 10th–11th centuries; and that groups II–V, although represented, especially group IV, are less frequent. It should be noted that if we leave out the 74 burials in the cemetery of Şirioara, the proportions are overturned; then there would be only 86 cases belonging to group I., as opposed to the 117 cases belonging to group IV. Adding groups II, III and V to it, the known cases would total 177, as opposed to the 160 cases belonging to group I.

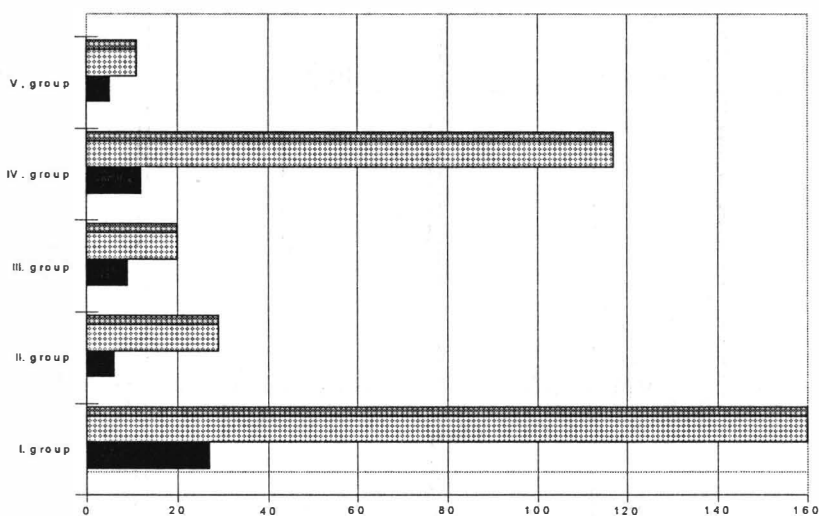


Figure 8

After a close analysis of the finds of the graves we may conclude that burials belonging to group I are mostly weapon-horse burials, yet this is not regular: in 14 cases an arm of the skeleton in a horse-weapon burial was stretched, *i.e.*, they belong to the first group. Male or female burials without weapons in horse burials may also be considered here: there are four such cases. The majority of graves belonging to group I (14 cemeteries) are known from cemeteries with horse burials (Cluj-Napoca-Pata, -Zápolya, Vărşand-Laposhalom, Hodoni-Pocioroane, Gâmbaş-Măgura, Blandiana-“B” cemetery, Salonta, Sânpetru German-G.A.S. premises, Dudeştii Vechi VI-mound-Hunca Mare, Şiclău-Gropoaie, Orăştie-Dealul Pemilor, Timişoara-Ciorenii – grave 19, Voiteni). Whereas a significant proportion of the cemeteries (9 cemeteries) contained no weapon or horse burials (Alba Iulia-Brânduşei Street, Alba Iulia-Pâclişa, Oradea-“În Vii”, Şirioara-Podirei, Sălacea, Dumbrăviţa, Hunedoara-Kincseshegy, Moldoveneşti-Jósika Aladár garden, Zalău-Palvar).

This is in inverse proportion to the graves belonging to groups II–V, where weapon-horse burials are underrepresented. In group II, there are three weapon-horse burials, in group III there is only one. In group I there are 4 weapon-horse burials, as opposed to group V, where there were no weapon burials, only one horse burial with a female body (Şiclău – grave 9), and one male burial with a mounted belt (Şeitin – grave 1). In these four groups, the proportion of poor burials without goods is quite large.

Our conclusions on the above data are as follows:

1. The arm positions of group I are known mostly from cemeteries with weapon or horse burials dating from the 10th century. However, they are known from cemeteries that contain no horse-weapon burials although they date from the 10th century. These positions become less and less frequent in later burials, and are very rare indeed in cemeteries dating from the 11th century (*e.g.*, in Hunedoara there are only six, in Moldoveneşti there is only one).

2. On the other hand, these positions are frequent in Transylvanian cemeteries dating from the 11th century (Moldoveneşti – 28 graves, Hunedoara–23 graves). The pattern, however, occurs in all the three regions, which means that we must not interpret the later Transylvanian burials as a regional phenomenon. It is more likely that this is a result of an ongoing change of burial rites in the 11th century, in the course of which the dominant arm positions of the 10th century gave way to those that – although not unknown in the 10th century – had been practised in smaller proportions.

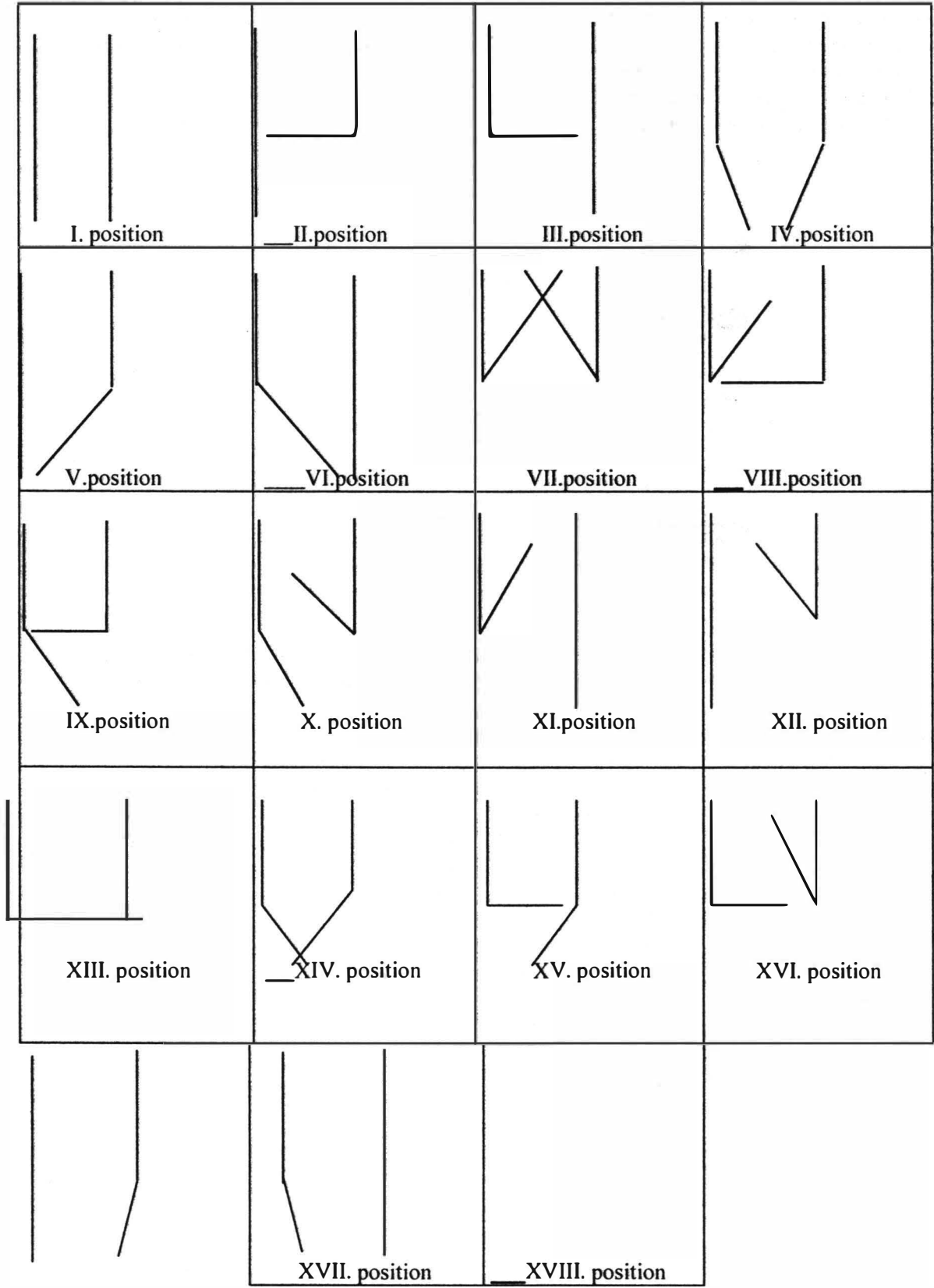


Figure 9

**IV. 2. Irregular positions in the grave: contracted burials, knees brought up against the chest and frog position (map 7; pl. 4; pl. 12: grave 38; pl. 15; pl. 21; pl. 3; pl. 29)**

Irregular positions are known in some instances, in the region under study, in cemeteries dating from the 10th–11th centuries. S. Tettamanti has collected the contracted burials in the Carpathian basin<sup>158</sup>

These are classified into three groups:

**A. Contracted burials:** Hodoni – grave 16,<sup>159</sup> Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 254,<sup>160</sup> Vârșand–Laposhalom – grave 23.<sup>161</sup>

**B. With the knees brought up against the chest:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 38,<sup>162</sup> Salonta–Movila – grave 1,<sup>163</sup> Șiclău – grave 9,<sup>164</sup> Biharea Cetate – grave 11.<sup>165</sup>

**C. In frog position:** Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street-grave 53.<sup>166</sup>

Two of the three contracted burials (Hodoni – grave 16; Vârșand–Laposhalom – grave 23) contained no grave goods; there is no information on the third. Both these graves were found in cemeteries with a large number of graves, with scarce grave goods, dating from the 10th–11th centuries; grave 254 in Alba Iulia was recovered from a cemetery dating from the 11th century.

The interpretation of these cases and the consequences drawn are dubious. Probably some of the cases (for example a grave with contracted burial beside graves with scarce grave goods, e.g., Aldebrő, Derecske, Tiszanána/Hungary) might suggest “slaves”, but in the case of a cemetery of a highly heterogeneous community in terms of orientation and burial customs, such as the cemetery of Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street, it is only conjectural and difficult to prove. This holds for the cemeteries at Vârșand and Hodoni, since it would seem a plausible hypothesis indeed to say that in the society of the 11th century there were rich and poor Hungarians, the former having servants, but how can we imagine that a whole community had only one servant (slave?) (one grave in 50–60). In my opinion the stock sociological explanation according to which graves with contracted burials are graves of servants (slaves?), needs revision. In the case of major cemeteries, this claim does not seem logical (Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 57; Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street; Vârșand–Laposhalom – grave 58).

As opposed to contracted burials, the chronological and social classification of graves where the knees of the interred were brought up to the chest is markedly different from the previous group. Graves belonging to this group were found in cemeteries dating from the 10th century; whereas the woman in grave 9 in Șiclău with a symbolic horse burial was discovered in a cemetery with weapon-horse burials, which was considered to be of the arms-bearing, “middle” social status. Two more graves were found in a different setting: one in a typical, poor, “middle status” setting, the other, as described above, in the burial site of an unquestionably alien population. At the same place – the future capital of the Transylvanian Voivodship – was found the frog position burial, without burial goods, in grave 53 with NE-SW orientation, with known parallels in Rétköz.<sup>167</sup> These two groups can be dated only to the 10th century, at the present status of research they are not represented in 11th century burials.

**IV. 3. Double burial**

The custom of double burial was known among the conquering Hungarian population, but it was not widely practised. In the area under study, there are only a handful of documented cases. The most general type is the burial of child and parent, but at some sites two adults were buried.

<sup>158</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 101.

<sup>159</sup> Drașovean, Țeicu, Muntean, 1996, 36–37.

<sup>160</sup> Blăjan, Stoicovici, Botezatu, 1990–1991, 273.

<sup>161</sup> Popescu, 1956, 129.

<sup>162</sup> Dragotă, Brânda, 2000, 294, grave 14, pl. VI.

<sup>163</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>164</sup> Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 707–708, fig. 3.

<sup>165</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>166</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>167</sup> Istvánovits, 2002, 254.

Sites: Alba Iulia–Street. Brândușei – grave 22 A-B (mother and child);<sup>168</sup> Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 107A-B (two adults);<sup>169</sup> Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare: child and parent<sup>170</sup> (several graves); Oradea–Szalka platform – -graves 1 A-B and 6-7 (woman and child);<sup>171</sup> Șiclău-grave 3 (man and woman); Sălacea – grave 4 (man and woman, adults);<sup>172</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy–grave 16 (adult and child).<sup>173</sup>

There are double burials of parent and child known from four sites, and double burials of adults from three sites. We would like to treat grave 3 at Șiclău in further detail since it is hardly known by Hungarian archaeologists, and Romanian archaeologists have not been more thorough, since the only study dealing with this period failed to address this issue.<sup>174</sup>

The grave at hand may be dated to the 10th century and on the ground of the grave finds typical of the conquering Hungarians it may be dated to the first half of this century. The grave was discovered at a distance of 160 cm from grave 1, a female grave with rosette appliques. The size of the pit of it could be measured at the depth of 80 cm. The size of the oval pit was 110 × 60 cm. At the depth of 130 cm, a thin layer of ash and coal was discovered, 4–5 cm thick, covering the whole of the grave surface. Under this layer, human bones mixed with horse and sheep bones were found; the grave goods (sabre, bit, fragments of a stirrup) were badly damaged. The full depth of the grave was 190 cm; fragments of human bones were found at the depth of 140, 165 and 190 cm. We firmly believe that there is no doubt about its having been disturbed. According to the anthropological analysis of Professor I.G. Russu, the human bones are fragments of male and female skeletons.

What cannot be settled satisfactorily, either because there was no appropriate excavation record kept or the results were/could not be published,<sup>175</sup> is whether or not the bones analysed by Professor I.G. Russu were found at the depth of 140, 165 or 190 cm. Many questions arise:

1. Was the grave disturbed? Is this the reason for the bones having been recovered from different layers?
2. If it was not disturbed and according to E. Dörner and M. Russu, was it a burial custom?
3. Was it a double burial of a male and female, or was it a secondary burial? Strangely, there were no finds indicating female gender.<sup>176</sup>
4. In the Conquest Period, no burial of this depth is known. At the cemetery of Șiclău the deepest grave was found at the depth of 100 cm. A grave-pit of 110 cm in depth is even less probable. Graves of this depth, however, were found in the “Blandiana” group in Transylvania dating from the 9th century. The depth of grave 2 at Blandiana “A”, which has been thought to be Hungarian for a long time, is 170 cm;<sup>177</sup> the average depth of graves in the “Bulgarian” phase at Stația de Salvare is 150–170 cm.<sup>178</sup> Similar depths are known from the cemeteries of the Lower Danube region: the average grave depth at Izvoru is 200 cm;<sup>179</sup> the average depth of adult and child burials excavated at Obârșia Nouă is 253 cm and 159 cm, respectively.<sup>180</sup> The depth of graves excavated at Sultana ranges from 100 to 300 cm.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Drâmbărean, Rodean, Gligor, Moga, Anghel, 1998, 187, map 3.

<sup>169</sup> Blăjan, Stoicovici, Botezatu, 1990–1991, 273.

<sup>170</sup> Ciugudeanu, 2002, 11.

<sup>171</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>172</sup> Chidioșan, 1969, 611–613. I am indebted to Attila Lakatos for his help.

<sup>173</sup> Roska, 1913, 173.

<sup>174</sup> Cosma, 2001, 499–564.

<sup>175</sup> A situation best exemplified by the cemeteries of Sălacea and Salonta, where sketches were made of the graves, but have not been published.

<sup>176</sup> Finds in the grave: fragments of sabre (?), fragments of stirrup, foal bit. Horse bones found in the grave suggest horse burial.

<sup>177</sup> Anghel, Ciugudeanu, 1987, 179–180.

<sup>178</sup> Ciugudeanu, 1996, 5.

<sup>179</sup> Mitrea, 1989, 145–219.

<sup>180</sup> Toropu, Stoica, 1972, 165.

<sup>181</sup> Mitrea, 1988, 91–139.

It is impossible to judge the exact state of this grave. We must include it, however, on a list of double burials, mainly because this was the only one grave with typical Conquest Period weapon-horse burial.

With due cautiousness, we would like to add some general conclusions here.

As to the geographical distribution, there is an unmistakable concentration around Alba Iulia. Yet, this should not be made too much of, since there have been more than 2000 graves excavated here (Stația de Salvare–1700+7; Vânătorilor Street–186; Brândușei Street–57 graves; Izvorul Împăratului–22 graves; Castle-SW part–1; Roman Catholic Archbishopric–1; Pâclișă–3 graves and stray finds of destroyed graves). Thus, the representation of this phenomenon is insignificant. Double burials are known from Crișana and Banat as well. In the graves at Biharea, adults and children were deposited, in the grave at Sălăcea two adults, male and female.

As to the chronology, most of the double burials are known from cemeteries dating from the 10th century, except for two cases dating from the 11th century (Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street–107-A-B; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 16). Burials dated to the 10th century can be dated to the second half of the century on the grounds of their finds (Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street; Oradea–“În Vii”, Sălăcea–Vidahegy); yet if grave 3 at Șiclău is correctly classified among the double burials, we have an example from a cemetery dated to the first two thirds of the 10th century. We cannot date the double burials at Stația de Salvare in Alba Iulia more accurately than the 10th century. It should be noted, however, that double burials are known from later periods as well, but these are burials of parents and their (?) children.<sup>182</sup>

As I have pointed out, there is one double burial in cemeteries with horse-weapon burial. The rest of the cases are known from cemeteries with poor finds, where horse-weapon burials are not represented.

Here the question of whether the double burials of adults (male and female) are burials of another population may be formulated as a working hypothesis. The 10th century Arabian traveller, Al Mas'udi, reports that the Slavs are sun-worshippers,<sup>183</sup> and then he goes on to report widow sacrifices, *i.e.*, the woman following the man to the grave.<sup>184</sup> This is corroborated by archaeological data; most importantly by graves from sites dated to the previous period, the 8th–9th centuries. We deem it important that in some cases in biritual cemeteries graves were found with two skeletons (Mihăileni – graves 18 and 22,<sup>185</sup> Ocna Sibiului); moreover, in one case, at Mediaș-Villadomb, a skeleton with NE-SW orientation (grave 5 and grave 9).<sup>186</sup> The cemetery at Ocna Sibiului is really significant, as 88 urn burials have been examined here, and 82 of these contained the bones of two persons: one male, and one female.<sup>187</sup> It has been observed that this custom was common in child burials as well.<sup>188</sup>

Double burials are documented from the Lower Danube region in great numbers. For instance graves 32 and 38 at Sultana.

The question is whether these burials were the archaeological legacy of a Slavic population in the process of abandoning the custom of cremation burials and adopting that of inhumation burials. The former occurs in significant proportion in the 8th–9th centuries,<sup>189</sup> later it is less and less frequent, so much so that in the 10th century it is documented only in a few cases, mostly in parent-child burials.

In our opinion, further investigation of double burials in other regions of the Carpathian basin is needed, which would then enable us to better understand this phenomenon.

<sup>182</sup> Cluj–Mănăștur – graves 124–125: child and mother. The grave is dated by a coin of Ladislav I to the end of the 11th and beginning of 12th centuries. Another case is grave 38 at Malomoldal in Sighișoara, where again parent and child were buried. This grave is dated by a 12th century anonymous dinar.

<sup>183</sup> Eliade, 1999, notes 28, 71–72.

<sup>184</sup> Kmoskó, 1997, 154.

<sup>185</sup> Dumitrașcu, Togan, 1974, 93–108.

<sup>186</sup> Horedt, 1965, 12.

<sup>187</sup> Nicolaescu, Wolski, 1975, 195.

<sup>188</sup> Nicolaescu, Wolski, 1975, 212.

<sup>189</sup> Example cemetery at Ocna Sibiului.

#### ***IV. 4. Skull burial (map 6; pl. 20: grave 11)***

The skull burial, known from grave 15 at Pata Street in Cluj-Napoca<sup>190</sup> and from grave 11 in the cemetery at Tărian is extremely rare. Unfortunately, the age of those buried this way has not been determined. All that is known about the grave at Pata Street is that the skull was the only thing found in the grave, we have no more data available. From the grave at Tărian are known two grooved hair rings ending in S, coin CNH 25 of Ladislav (László) I, glass and clay beads, and an iron band.

S. Tettamanti described only two, probably authentic parallels, yet she did not attempt to explain them.<sup>191</sup> The burials at Piliny,<sup>192</sup> Kisdobra<sup>193</sup> and Tărian are surprisingly similar to each other (the upright position of the skull, string of beads and other neckwear). There is another example of this kind recovered at Karos, cemetery II.<sup>194</sup> As testified by Révész, the small diameter of the twisted torque at Piliny hints at child burial. These data therefore possibly indicate that skull burial was most common in child burials.

The chronology of these graves is likewise uncertain. What we can infer from the data at hand is that skull burials were practised solely in the 10th century. A later dating, in the 11th century, was suggested by Cs. Bálint, who also emphasised the fact that these graves were recovered from poor cemeteries, based on the example of skull burials in the cemetery at Batajnica/Serbia. On these grounds he rejected the interpretation of Dienes I, according to which the Hungarians tried in this way to help the “head soul” of those fallen during the plundering campaigns make its escape home.<sup>195</sup> The later dating may be supported by the fact that in both cases of Piliny and Kisdobra a torque was placed beside the skull, a practice which first appeared at the end of the 10th century according to some authors, but others believe that it may have appeared around the second third of the century.<sup>196</sup>

The skull burial at Tărian is the first that can be dated without doubt to the second half of the 11th century. In the case of grave 11, a more certain dating than in the case of previous parallels is possible thanks to a perforated Ladislav (László) I coin, worn around the neck. Based on this evidence, the burial may be dated after 1077, at the end of the 11th century. The grave goods, occurring in many cases, but mostly the pottery found in the grave at Kisdobra suggest connections between this custom and pagan beliefs and views concerning the afterlife. The skull-find in the cemetery of Tărian is later in date than all the other graves by at least three quarters of a century. It would seem likely that a pagan cemetery came to be used later for Christian burials, in a time when an already Christian burial site must have existed and been in the use of the same community of Tărian. In summary, we may conclude that the small number of skull burials in the 11th century is probably to be interpreted as the reappearance of a pagan custom in a Christian setting. In this context, we do not necessarily have to reject the interpretation of I. Dienes, since the notion of the escape of the “skull soul” may well have surfaced in Christian burial customs as well, although it was not very popular in the 11th century.

#### ***IV. 5. Trepanation***

Real trepanations are somewhat more frequent than skull burials. Symbolic trepanation has not hitherto been documented in the region under study. An excellent and thorough analysis has been offered on trepanation in the study of T. Grynaeus.<sup>197</sup> This contains all the available literature, the geographical distribution, chronology, previous examples in the Carpathian basin, east of it, and in the Balkan, the reasons, forms and procedures.

<sup>190</sup> I am grateful to Ioana Hica for this information.

<sup>191</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 102

<sup>192</sup> Nyáry, 1902, 229.

<sup>193</sup> Dókus, 1900, 60–61.

<sup>194</sup> Révész, 1996, 193.

<sup>195</sup> Bálint, 1978, 266.

<sup>196</sup> Giesler, 1981, 116–120, pl. 53.; Révész, 1996, 92.

<sup>197</sup> Grynaeus, 1996, 56–103.

As to the plate of sites of T. Grynaeus, in which he lists Alba Iulia–Zlatna road,<sup>198</sup> grave 11 at Zápolya Street in Cluj-Napoca<sup>199</sup> and Sălacea–Vidahegy – grave 1,<sup>200</sup> I have a few comments to make. First, he omitted grave 24 at Hunedoara,<sup>201</sup> and indicated it as number 51 on the distribution map. Secondly, the author of this excellent volume, probably following in the footsteps of Russu and Bologa, who mixed the finds, dated the trepanated skull at Zlatna Street in Alba Iulia to the 11th century, although associated finds indicate the 10th century.

To the plate of T. Grynaeus the skeleton with a trepanated skull recovered from grave 7 at Timișoara–Cioreni may be added. The skull of the *maturus* male, 35–40 years of age at the time of death, buried in grave 7 at Timișoara was “bored” on the right side of the top. According to its publisher, the wound healed and the diameter was 95 mm.<sup>202</sup>

As to geographical distribution, it is evident that trepanation occurs in different parts of the region: at northern (Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 11) and southern (Alba Iulia–Zalatnai Street, Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 24) points of Transylvania, as well as in the southern parts of Crișana (Sălacea–Vidahegy – grave 1), and in the Banat (Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 7). This supports our statement, which is in keeping with Grynaeus’ view, that the trepanation was known and practised over all the territory inhabited by the Hungarians.

As to chronology, similar finds are known in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat only from the Conquest Period. The earliest is probably the one in Cluj-Napoca, and the one in Alba Iulia. The plate of Grynaeus (conforming to Chidioșan’s opinion) dates the find of Sălacea to the beginning of the century, despite the fact that his finds suggest a later dating. Based on his finds, the grave discovered from the cemetery at Timișoara can be dated to the end of the 10th and the first decades of the 11th century. The István I coin makes it clear that grave 24 at Hunedoara must be dated to the first half of the 11th century. There is a later case, not known in the Hungarian literature, discovered at Reșița–Moroasa, which was dated to the 14th–15th centuries.<sup>203</sup>

As to the social interpretation, we can only say this custom is known not only from warrior burials (Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya 11, maybe one grave at Alba Iulia–Zlatna road), but also and from poorly furnished graves or graves with no grave goods at all (Sălacea–Vidahegy – grave 1; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 7; Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 24).

In most of the graves the skull found belonged to a male body (Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street. – 11, Sălacea–Vidahegy – grave 1; Timișoara–Cioreni – grave 7). Having no anthropological data on the grave at Alba Iulia and grave 24 at Hunedoara, we cannot determine the sex of the interred, but they may have been males. This is supported by T. Grynaeus’s suggestion, as most trepanned finds in the Carpathian basin belonged to a male.<sup>204</sup>

## V. Oboli in the graves (map 7)

Probably the most difficult task is the interpretation of different coin positions in the graves as oboli or as clothing accessories; *i.e.*, as parts of the burial custom or as parts of clothing. Coins confidently interpreted as oboli are coins found on the chest, in the mouth and in the hand.

<sup>198</sup> Mention of the site: Nagy, 1913, 272; Bodrogi, 1913, 18–25; Russu, Bologa, 1961, 45–66.

<sup>199</sup> László, 1943; Russu, Bologa, 1961, 45–66.

<sup>200</sup> Chidioșan, 1969, 611. According to Lakatos Attila the skull was lost.

<sup>201</sup> The 165 cm long skeleton could not have belonged to a child, as Márton Roska suggested. The grave can be dated to the 11th century by an István I coin. The body was buried in a coffin.

<sup>202</sup> The publication of the cemetery: Rădulescu, Gáll, 2001, 156–196. The anthropological analyses: Muntean, 1999, 533–554.

<sup>203</sup> Muntean, 1999, 355–366.

<sup>204</sup> Grynaeus, 1996, 86–89: pl. IX.

Another question is when it appeared in the Carpathian basin. According to Radomirsky P. and Szőke B., the custom spread in the 11th century,<sup>205</sup> while others believe that it appeared through Byzantine influence,<sup>206</sup> or Frankish influence through the Moravians.<sup>207</sup> B.M. Szőke, following B. Szőke, argues that the custom was reintroduced.<sup>208</sup>

It seems certain that this custom became more widespread in the 11th century, yet there is substantial amount of evidence from the 10th century as well. Based on the data provided by L. Kovács, 56 cases have been identified in the Carpathian basin. One of the earliest examples is grave 52 in cemetery II at Karos. According to Kovács's theory, the Hungarians may have brought this custom with them from the East.<sup>209</sup>

Coin finds confidently identified as *oboli* in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat: Alba Iulia–Pâclișa – grave 2,<sup>210</sup> Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – graves 1, 12, 101, 114, 121, 122, 133, 134, 139, 148, 152, 155, 165, 167, 172, 178, 180, 182, 205, 208, 220, 225, 235;<sup>211</sup> Vărșand–Laposhalom – grave 55; Roska – graves I, IV, V, graves VII, VIII, XI,<sup>212</sup> Hodoni – grave 2 and 4;<sup>213</sup> Vladimirescu,<sup>214</sup> Șiclău – graves 7, 9;<sup>215</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 1, 4, 6, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, 33, 39, 46;<sup>216</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár's garden – graves 2, 18, 22, 23, 24, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, 55;<sup>217</sup> Noșlac–Pompa de apă.<sup>218</sup> There are, of course, scores of examples where the coins found are to be interpreted as *oboli*, but these have been excluded on the grounds of their chronology (late 11th century–13th century).<sup>219</sup>

Coins, probably *oboli*, were found in the following cemeteries used in the 10th–11th centuries: Deva,<sup>220</sup> Pădureni,<sup>221</sup> Oradea–“În Vii”,<sup>222</sup> Vladimirescu,<sup>223</sup> Șirioara–Podirei,<sup>224</sup> Triesti András's collection,<sup>225</sup> Zeykfalva,<sup>226</sup> Zimandu Nou.<sup>227</sup>

### Position of the coins in the graves

The position of the coins in the graves shows a great variety.

<sup>205</sup> Radomirsky, 1955, 3–7.; Szőke, 1962, 92.

<sup>206</sup> Bálint, 1976, 240.

<sup>207</sup> Kolníková, 1967, 214–216.

<sup>208</sup> Szőke, 1987, 78.

<sup>209</sup> Kovács L., 2004, 43–50.

<sup>210</sup> Ciugudean, Dragota, 2001, 272, 4, pl. 2a–b.

<sup>211</sup> Blăjan, Stoicovici, Botezatu, 1990–93, 273–290.

<sup>212</sup> Popescu, 1956, 132.

<sup>213</sup> Bejan, Moga, 1979, 155, 5. fig. 5a.

<sup>214</sup> Coins as *oboli* recovered from several graves. Zdroba, Barbu, Ziridava, VI, 51–54; Zdroba, Barbu, Ziridava, VIII, 27–28; Zdroba, Barbu, Ziridava, X, 109–113; Zdroba, Barbu, Ziridava, X, 190.

<sup>215</sup> Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 708, fig. 3.

<sup>216</sup> Roska, 1913.169, 171, 174, 176–178.

<sup>217</sup> Jósika, 1914, 121; Roska, 1914, 131, 133–134, 137–138, 143.

<sup>218</sup> Information by Călin Cosma.

<sup>219</sup> I give here, however, a list, which is by no means exhaustive: Bihar–Téglagyár; Biharszentjános – grave 1; Giagiu–church – graves 4, 8, 10, 24, 40, 41, 42, 59; Kapjon; Kide; Cluj–Mănăștur – graves 10, 32, 41, 55, 75, 124, 130, 137; Mehádia – grave 7; Sighișoara–În vii; Sălăcea–Castlebot; Sălăcea–Szállásdomb; Moldovenești near the Unitarian church.

<sup>220</sup> MHK, 200.

<sup>221</sup> Coins of Andrew (András) I (1046–1060). F.É.K, 319; ArchÉrt, 1870, 119; Bóna, 1988, 215.

<sup>222</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>223</sup> Grave without number: Péter, Andrew I (1046–1060), Béla I. (1060–1063).

<sup>224</sup> Probably with a coin of István I (1001–1038). Dănilă, 1974, 58.

<sup>225</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>226</sup> Some think, however, that the coin is from a settlement.

<sup>227</sup> Coins of Béla I (1060–1063) and Ladislav I (1077–1095). Réthy, 1898, 128 a–b.

1. *In the mouth*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – graves 101,<sup>228</sup> 114,<sup>229</sup> 133,<sup>230</sup> 148,<sup>231</sup> 152,<sup>232</sup> 178,<sup>233</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár's garden – grave 55;<sup>234</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár's garden – graves 23,<sup>235</sup> 31 (child),<sup>236</sup> 32,<sup>237</sup> Vărșand – grave I.<sup>238</sup>
2. *At the left side of the lower jaw*: Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 1,<sup>239</sup>
3. *On the lower jaw*: Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár's garden – grave 34<sup>240</sup>
4. *By the jaw*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 167;<sup>241</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 30 (child).<sup>242</sup>
5. *Right by the jaw*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – graves 155,<sup>243</sup> 172,<sup>244</sup> 235.<sup>245</sup>
6. *At the left side of the jaw*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 122.<sup>246</sup>
7. *By the jaw*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 139.<sup>247</sup>
8. *Under the left ear*: Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár's garden – grave 2.<sup>248</sup>
9. *With fragments of the skull*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 205;<sup>249</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár's garden – grave 22<sup>250</sup> (child)
10. *By the skull*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 12;<sup>251</sup> Alba Iulia–Pâclișa–grave 2.<sup>252</sup>
11. *At the left side of the skull*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 134;<sup>253</sup> Hodoni–grave 2 (female-maturus).<sup>254</sup>
12. *At the neck*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 208;<sup>255</sup> Moldovenești–Jósika Aladár garden – grave 28 (child)<sup>256</sup>-two coins, Vărșand–Laposhalom – grave VII<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Unidentifiable.

<sup>229</sup> Ladislav I (1077–1095)

<sup>230</sup> Ladislav I (1077–1095)

<sup>231</sup> Béla I (1060–1063)

<sup>232</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060)

<sup>233</sup> Salamon (1063–1074)

<sup>234</sup> Ladislav I (1077–1095)

<sup>235</sup> Stephen (István) I (1001–1038)

<sup>236</sup> András I (1046–1060)

<sup>237</sup> István I (1001–1038)

<sup>238</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060)

<sup>239</sup> Cannot be identified.

<sup>240</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060)

<sup>241</sup> Ladislav I (1077–1095)

<sup>242</sup> Cannot be determined.

<sup>243</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>244</sup> Unidentifiable.

<sup>245</sup> Unidentifiable.

<sup>246</sup> Salamon (1063–1074).

<sup>247</sup> Ladislav I (1077–1095).

<sup>248</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>249</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>250</sup> András I (1046–1060).

<sup>251</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>252</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>253</sup> Salamon (1063–1074).

<sup>254</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>255</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>256</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>257</sup> Ladislav I (1077–1095).

13. *On the chest*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 165,<sup>258</sup> Vărşand–Laposhalom – grave 55, VIII,<sup>259</sup> XI;<sup>260</sup> Şiclău – grave 7 (female);<sup>261</sup> Uivar – grave 1 (child),<sup>262</sup> Moldoveneşti–Jósika Aladár's garden – grave 35 (child).<sup>263</sup>

14. *On the right side of the chest*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 180.<sup>264</sup>

15. *On the left side of the chest*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 220.<sup>265</sup>

16. *By the right shoulder*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 225.<sup>266</sup>

17. *By the left shoulder*: Moldoveneşti–Jósika Aladár's garden – grave 24 (child).<sup>267</sup>

18. *Under the pelvis*: Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 31;<sup>268</sup> Hodoni – grave 2 (female-maturus).<sup>269</sup>

19. *On the pelvis*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 114;<sup>270</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 33 (child);<sup>271</sup> Moldoveneşti–Jósika Aladár garden – grave 38.<sup>272</sup>

20. *On the left hip-bone*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 121.<sup>273</sup>

21. *On the stomach, between the spine and the right elbow*: Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor Street – grave 182.<sup>274</sup>

22. *In the angle of the upper and lower arm*: Alba Iulia–Pâclişa – grave 2 (infant II).<sup>275</sup>

23. *In the hand*: Vărşand–Laposhalom – grave V.<sup>276</sup>

24. *Under the left hand*: Hodoni – grave 4 (female-adult, 22 year old).<sup>277</sup>

25. *By the upper vertebrae*: Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 23.<sup>278</sup>

26. *By the first vertebra*: Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – graves 24 (child),<sup>279</sup> 29,<sup>280</sup> 39.<sup>281</sup>

27. *Under the left elbow*: Şiclău – grave 9 (female).<sup>282</sup>

The positions are concentrated to three main areas of the body: 1. near the skull, in the skull or in the mouth; 2. on the chest; 3. on or under the pelvis; 4. near or in the hands.

### ***Sex assessment, archaeological context and chronology of the skeletons buried with obolus***

According to B. Szőke, *oboli* were placed in female and child burials, and only exceptionally in male burials.<sup>283</sup> However, Szőke did not know the finds from the cemetery at Halimba and the anthropological analysis of the cemetery at Pusztaszentlászló.<sup>284</sup> It is of interest here to note that the earliest find of an obolus, grave 52 at cemetery II at Karos, was a male burial.

<sup>258</sup> Béla I (1060–1063).

<sup>259</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>260</sup> Ladislas I (1077–1095).

<sup>261</sup> Cannot be determined.

<sup>262</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>263</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>264</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>265</sup> Géza I.

<sup>266</sup> Salamon (1063–1074).

<sup>267</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>268</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>269</sup> Stephen I.

<sup>270</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>271</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>272</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>273</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>274</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>275</sup> Andrew I (1046–1060).

<sup>276</sup> Unidentifiable.

<sup>277</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>278</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>279</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>280</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>281</sup> Stephen I (1001–1038).

<sup>282</sup> Cannot be determined.

<sup>283</sup> Szőke, 1962, 92.

<sup>284</sup> Török, 1962, 142–169; Szőke, 1987, 77–78.

As pointed out by B.M. Szőke, placing an obolus was not dependent on the sex and age of the interred. Considering the data at our disposal and the state of research, we can only make tentative remarks.

The obolus recovered from the cemetery at Alba Iulia–Pâclișa was found in an infant II burial.

Thanks to the anthropological analyses, we have the full picture of the obolus burials at Alba Iulia Vânătorilor Street. Out of 23 graves with obolus, there were 10 burials of *maturus* women (121, 122, 152, 155, 172, 180, 205, 220, 225, and 235), 3 burials of adultus men (1, 12, and 182), 3 burials of *maturus* men (114, 133, and 165), 2 burials of infans II (girls) (148, 208). There was one burial of an adultus-*maturus* woman (101), one burial of a *senilis* woman (178), one young woman (134), one girl (139), and one adultus-*maturus* man (167). In the light of anthropological results, it is evident that this custom was most typical of female burials. 13 out of 23 burials were female burials, but grave 148 and 208, burials of infans II girls, and grave 139 of a little girl, also belong here. The number of female burials is thus 16 in total, as opposed to seven male burials. It seems that in child burials only girls are buried with coins and this custom was represented in adult burials mostly by female burials. However, we must refrain from overgeneralising, since seven burials of 23 were male burials.

In grave 2 at Hodoni a *maturus*, in grave 4 a 22 year old adultus woman were buried. Graves 7 and 9 at Șiclău were likewise female burials. We do not have much information on the obolus graves at Vladimirescu, because the cemetery is unpublished. Furthermore, all we know about the grave at Uivar is that it was a child/infans burial.

It seems certain that this custom was common in child burials in cemeteries dating from the early Árpád period, but it was not dominant. In the cemetery at Hunedoara *oboli* were found in two of the six child burials (24, 30, 33), the rest of the graves with *oboli* contained an adult skeleton of undetermined sex (1, 4, 6, 23, 29, 31, 39, 46). We found the same proportion in the cemetery at Moldovenești: from 12 obolus burials (2, 18, 22, 23, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, and 55), four were children graves (22, 24, 28, 35).

An obolus find is known from Vârșand–Laposhalom, in grave 55, and in grave 2 excavated by Roska.

In summary, it can be stated in the light of data at our disposal that this custom was mostly represented in woman and child burials. This is supported by female burials in the cemeteries of Hodoni, Șiclău, Uivar, which are interspersed with “pagan” elements, indicating the first phase of this custom. The child burials in grave 2 at Alba Iulia–Pâclișa, grave 24 at Hunedoara, grave 24 at Moldovenești dated by a coin of István I also belong here. Without anthropological analyses, however, we cannot but conjecture on the cemeteries at Hunedoara, Moldovenești, and the other unpublished burials.

As we have already stated in a study on the S shaped hair rings,<sup>285</sup> their eastward spreading matches that of the obolus burials. The burial custom under study first appeared in the southern part of Crișana, and in Banat in the 10th century (Șiclău – grave 7, 9; Uivar – grave 1), only to spread further east to Transylvania, as indicated by burials under the reign of István I. We do not pretend to a competence in determining the origin of this custom, yet we believe that it originated in Byzantium. The theory of L. Kovács, that the obolus custom first appeared with the Hungarians, is only partly accepted in the light of the obolus grave with N-S orientation at Uivar and the finds in the Lower Danube region (e.g., Izvoru). I suggest that this custom derived from two sources: east (conquering Hungarians) and south-east (cultural influence of the Lower Danube region).

To avoid further misunderstanding, we give a list of those cases where the coin find cannot be interpreted as obolus: Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – grave 11;<sup>286</sup> Hunedoara–Kincseshegy – grave 46,<sup>287</sup> Deta-stray finds,<sup>288</sup> Timișoara–Cimitirul Eroilor stray finds.<sup>289</sup>

<sup>285</sup> Gáll, 2004, 18 (ms).

<sup>286</sup> The coin of Ladislas I (1077–1095) was found by the skull, perforated.

<sup>287</sup> A perforated, heavy and flat hammered Byzantine coin by the neck area.

<sup>288</sup> Coin of Leo VI the Philosopher (886–912). Berkeszi, 1907, 15; Sabău, 1958, 272: ActaMN, 4.; Feneșan, 1974, 108.

<sup>289</sup> Coins of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and Zoe Karvounopsina (913–919).

## VI. The ritual quality of the furnishings

### VI. a. Objects with protective power

Based on the research of Gy. László and ethnographical parallels<sup>290</sup> we can state that such objects as a sickle or other sharp objects were believed to have protective power.<sup>291</sup> There is one such find in Transylvania, which was found on the left knee of a woman buried in grave 19 in the Pata Street cemetery at Cluj-Napoca.<sup>292</sup>

In the burials of the 10th century in the Carpathian basin, this was a common practice. Without having a full list, I know burials of this type from the following sites: Bjelo-Brdo/Serbia, Cervenik – grave 4; Čahjouce/Slovakia – grave 489; in Hungary: Debrecen-Józsa-Klastrompart, Halimba – grave 27; Gádoros – grave 1; Kecel-Vádéi-lane – grave 3 and 5; Letenye, Naszvad – grave 2; Orosháza – grave 5; Püspökladány-Eperjesvölgy – grave 471; Rakamaz-Strázsadomb – grave “A”; Rovinka/Slovakia – grave 3; also in Hungary: Sárrétudvar-Hízóföld – grave 184; Sorokpolány – grave 16; Szarvas, Tiszabездé – grave 4 and 12; Visonta – grave 75; Zsitvabesenyő – graves 66, 80, 139; Ulany nad Zitavou – grave 27; Zalavár.<sup>293</sup>

Based on the research of Gy. László, the sickle in grave 471 at Püspökladány-Eperjesvölgy was thought to have protective power, but it was found on the left thighbone, by the inner side of the left hipbone pointing downwards, as if it had been placed in the left hand. Could a sickle in this position have had protective power? These cases make it clear that all data at our disposal must be dealt with in context and cautiously.

Sickle burial is most common in male burials, although in the last few years it has been found in woman (Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street – grave 19; Püspökladány-Eperjesvölgy – grave 471), and child burials as well (Debrecen-Józsa, Klastrompart – grave 41; Sárrétudvar-Hízóföld – grave 184, all in Hungary).

The chronology of these burials shows a wide variety. The burials of Gádoros, Naszvad – grave 2, Rakamaz-Strázsadomb – grave “A”, and Tiszabездé can be dated to the first half of the 10th century. Based on its finds, grave 19 at Cluj-Napoca is dated to the mid 10th century, and grave 2 at Kecel-Vádéi lane is dated to mid- or the second half of the 10th century.<sup>294</sup> Grave 41 recovered at Debrecen-Józsa Klastrompart is clearly dated to the second half of the century. For lack of horizontal relative chronology,<sup>295</sup> we can offer no closer dating for grave 184 at Sárrétudvar-Hízóföld than the 10th century. It seems certain that the cemetery was used from the first half of the 10th century and, as attested by a coin of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, it continued to be used in the second half and at the end of the century. Grave 471 at Püspökladány and the graves of Sorokpolány, Zalavár, Zsitvabesenyő-66, 80, 139, Ulany and Zitavou were found in cemeteries dated to the 10th–11th centuries.

<sup>290</sup> László, 1997, 357.

<sup>291</sup> The axe in the ground of grave 69 in cemetery II at Karos was interpreted by L. Révész as an object with protective power. Révész, 1996, 190–191.

<sup>292</sup> I am indebted for these data to Ioana Hica Câmpeanu.

<sup>293</sup> Bjelo-Brdo: Fehér, Éry, Kralovány, 1962, 91.sz.; Cervenik: Tocik, 1968, 17–20; Čakajovce: Reiholcová, 1995, CXXXVI, pl. 4.; Debrecen-Józsa, Klastrompart – grave 41: Nepper I, 2002, 41.; Gádoros-Bocskai Street: Fehér, Éry, Kralovány, 1962, no. 322, Szöke, 1962, 12; Halimba: Török, 1962, XX, pl. 6; Kecel-Vádéi lane: Fettich, 1937, 104–107; Letenye: Ballasa, 1994, 4, pl. I; Naszvad: Szöke, 1941, 214–222; Orosháza-Agricultural Cooperative: Olasz, 1959, I 1–4; Püspökladány-Eperjesvölgy – grave 471: Nepper, 2002, 220; Rakamaz-Strázsadomb: Fodor I. (ed.), A honfoglaló magyarság. Kiállítási katalógus., 1996, 110; Rovinka: Nemejcuva-Pavuková, 1962, 657–658; Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld – grave 184: Nepper, 2002, 336.; Sorokpolány: Fehér, Éry, Kralovány, 1962, nr. 906.; Szarvas-Káka-Kettőshalom: Szabó, 1964–1965, 61–71.; Tiszabездé: Jós, 1896, 385–389, IV, pl. IX; Visonta: Szabó, 1970, 269; Zsitvabesenyő: Fehér, Éry, Kralovány, 1962, nr. 83.; Zalavár: Fehér, Éry, Kralovány., 1962, nr. 1229.

<sup>294</sup> Dated by a coin issued in 931.

<sup>295</sup> I. Nepper in the 3 tomes of Corpus gives a thorough description of the cemetery at Sárrétudvar-Hízóföld, but he did not prepare a horizontal relative chronology. The grave in question, therefore, cannot be securely dated, because the other find of the grave, a deltoid-shape arrow head, is not specific to any period.

The custom was still in practice after the adoption of Christianity. This is supported by a find dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, where a sickle was placed on the right thigh of the interred<sup>296</sup>. The horizontal stratigraphic analysis of the 10th–11th centuries would provide us with more definite answers as to the chronological extension of this custom (together and in parallel with other pagan customs).

This custom is known from cemeteries with a small number of graves, from grave groups and from sizeable, poor cemeteries. The burial sites at Cervenik, Gádoros, Orosháza and Naszvad are grave groups. The cemeteries at Kecel, Cluj-Napoca, Rakamaz and Tiszabéd are somewhat larger, containing a considerable number of weapon-horse graves. The following sites are poor cemeteries with a large number of graves: Bjelo-Brdo, Čakajovce, Debrecen–Józsa Klastrompart – grave 41; Gádoros–Bocskai Street; Halimba, Letenye, Naszvad, Orosháza–Agricultural Cooperative, Püspökladány–Eperjesvölgy – grave 471; Rovinka/Slovakia, Sárrétudvar–Hízó föld – grave 184; Sorokpolány; Szarvas–Káka-Kettőshalom; Visonta; Zsitvabesenyő; Úlany nad Zitavou; Zalavár–Fortress. It is clear therefore that this custom is best represented in cemeteries with a large number of graves.

This custom was known in the Avar period, also from the 9th century. We do not consider this custom to be ethno-specific, since it was known in the Balkan as well as other regions of Eastern Europe.

#### ***VI. b. Damaged objects (pl. 8: grave 26)***

The finds at the following sites were probably wilfully damaged: Alba Iulia Brândușei Street – grave 26 and 55, Blandiana – grave 4 and Zalău – grave 9.<sup>297</sup>

Grave 11 from Blandiana B probably belongs here; the weapons, especially the sabre, were badly damaged, and the arrowheads were not in the quiver, but placed outside it. The arrowhead discovered in grave 2 of the same site should also be mentioned; the arrowhead was bent at 90°, which could not have been the result of being shot in the ground. The sword found at Ernei suffered a similar treatment, apparently in an attempt to fold it up.

I am inclined to be more sceptical about the finds at Cluj-Napoca. S. Tettamanti classified grave 1 at Zápolya at Cluj-Napoca here, but the published information suggests robbing rather than wilful damaging during the funerary process.<sup>298</sup>

#### ***VI. c. Disturbed graves***

Considering published and unpublished information, it would seem that the better furnished graves were disturbed. It remains unanswered whether these situations were instigated by superstition or were merely the consequences of robbery. Probably grave 3 at Șiclău was the only one where the disturbance was motivated by superstition.

The published material does not allow drawing more precise conclusions.<sup>299</sup>

### **VII. Sacrifices**

#### ***VII. 1. Horse burials (maps 8–10.; appendixes 2–5.; pl. 1; pl. 20: grave 29; pl. 21, 1–2; pl. 22; pl. 23: grave 4; pl. 25; pl. 30)***

The horse burial and its varieties in the Conquest Period have been considered as a Hungarian ethno-specific burial type. Unfortunately, the state of research in the field of Conquest Period burials in Transylvania puts us in an inconvenient position. Archaeological material finding its way to the museums in the 19th century was sadly lacking in information on the position of horse bones and tackle, not to mention unprofessional publication of cemeteries excavated afterwards, in which case there is no

<sup>296</sup> For this information I am indebted to Lóránt Darvas. According to the excavator, the interred was a cleric.

<sup>297</sup> A similar practice has been documented in the cemetery at Sopron-Présháztelep, dating from the 9th century, as well as in Nyitra and Zsitvaulány. Tettamanti, 1975, note 130.

<sup>298</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, note 132.

<sup>299</sup> Robbed graves: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – at least 3 graves, at Pata Street 9 graves were robbed. I am indebted to Hica Câmpeanu for this information.

information available on the exact position of horse bones and/or horse tackle in the graves. The collection, classification and, if relative, chronology of horse and horse tackle burials in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat is therefore so hindered as to make it virtually impossible. Cemeteries destroyed in agricultural works, the “contribution” of amateur archaeologists and the carelessness of “professionals” have destroyed invaluable information that cannot be retrieved.

More than three decades ago, Csanád Bálint classified horse burials of the Carpathian basin; 355 finds were collected and described by the Hungarian archaeologist. In his catalogue he could include and describe only a few cases from Romania.<sup>300</sup> The following sites on the Romanian side were included: Șiclău, Biharea-Șumuleu, Nădlac, Cluj-Napoca-Zăpolya Street, Sfântu Gheorghe-Epreștető.

Based on our data, indications of horse burial (in many cases only stray pieces of horse tackle) in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat are known from these sites: Arad-Ceala – grave X;<sup>301</sup> Biharea – grave 1–8;<sup>302</sup> Biharea-Castle-stray finds;<sup>303</sup> Sântandrei;<sup>304</sup> Jigodin;<sup>305</sup> Eresteghin-Zădogostető-stray finds;<sup>306</sup> Curtuișeni-stray finds;<sup>307</sup> Felnac;<sup>308</sup> Hodoni-Pocioroane – grave 3 and 17;<sup>309</sup> Cluj-Napoca-Zăpolya Street – graves 1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11,<sup>310</sup> Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street – grave 25;<sup>311</sup> Comloșu Mare-Posztzszállás, – north part of the town,<sup>312</sup> Tărian-Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – graves 21, 28, 29 36, 38,<sup>313</sup> Pecica – graves 1898–1902;<sup>314</sup> Nădlac – grave “A”;<sup>315</sup> Teremia Mare-stray finds;<sup>316</sup> Salonta – grave 2;<sup>317</sup> Sânpetru German-G.A.S. premises;<sup>318</sup> Dudeștii Vechi-mounds III–VI, and VIII;<sup>319</sup> Dudeștii Vechi-Dragomir mound – grave 4;<sup>320</sup> Șiclău – graves 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12;<sup>321</sup> Vărșand-Laposhalom – grave 33 and Krammer’s excavation;<sup>322</sup> Alba Iulia– SW part of the Fortress;<sup>323</sup> Alba Iulia–Roman Catholic Cathedral; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare – several graves;<sup>324</sup> Mâșca;<sup>325</sup> Sfântu Gheorghe-Epreștető;<sup>326</sup> Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor –

<sup>300</sup> Bálint, 1969, map.

<sup>301</sup> The finds recovered from a stone quarry; partially salvaged finds hint at a horse burial, referred to as grave X in the inventory of Aradi Museum. Dörner, 1970, 446.

<sup>302</sup> Karácsonyi, 1903, 405–412.

<sup>303</sup> Horedt, 1968, 422.

<sup>304</sup> Juhas, 1978, 495; *Repertoriul monografic al județului Bihor*, 1974, 69: 362.

<sup>305</sup> Unpublished. Fragments of stirrup and bit suggest that it may be a type of disturbed horse burial.

<sup>306</sup> László, 1943, 82, pl. XV, 3–4.

<sup>307</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>308</sup> A pair of stirrups suggests horse burial. Bálint, 1991, nr. 77; Bóna, 1988, 208, fig. 41.

<sup>309</sup> Bejan, Moga, 1979, fig. 1–3.; Drașovean, Teicu, Muntean, 1996, 37, pl. LX, pl. LXIII, 1–4.; pl. LXIV, 1–2.

<sup>310</sup> Kovács I., 1942, 85–115. (graves 10 and 11 unpublished).

<sup>311</sup> I am indebted to Ioana Hica Câmpeanu for the information. The cemetery has been unpublished for almost 20 years.

<sup>312</sup> Kisléghi, 1911, 318–320.

<sup>313</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>314</sup> Between 1898 and 1902 three stirrups and one bit were given to the Arad Museum from Pécska-Nagysánc, from at least 2 graves. The finds are unpublished. Gáll, 2004 (ms).

<sup>315</sup> Husarik, Gáll, 2004 (ms).

<sup>316</sup> Hampel, 1900, 667–671; Nagy, 13, 1893, 223–234.

<sup>317</sup> Lakatos, 2004 (in print).

<sup>318</sup> Dörner, 1970, 457.

<sup>319</sup> Unpublished apart from mounds III and IV.

<sup>320</sup> Tănase, Bejan, Kalciov, Gáll, 2004 (in print).

<sup>321</sup> Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 707.

<sup>322</sup> Medgyessy, 1995, 100; Popescu, 1956, 130.

<sup>323</sup> Heitel, 1986, 241.

<sup>324</sup> Some of the data, provided by Harhoiu Radu, also cited by István Bóna, suggest that there were probably 18 horse burials excavated. The excavators, however, make mention of only a few. Nevertheless, there must have been at least 3 horse burials, with pictures available. According to Heitel’s data at least 8 horse burials are known.

<sup>325</sup> There were at least 6 horse burials based on the available data. Photos provided by László Révész. Réthy, 1898, 124–128.

<sup>326</sup> To date it is still undecided whether the burial, thought to be from the 5th century, should be dated to the 10th century or not. The grave, published by Zoltán Székely, probably contained a horse burial placed at the legs. The finds are far from certain: a sword thought to be Byzantine, rusty pieces of iron, which, after a half century, were

graves 6, 7, 18, 26, 31–42; of the latter one contained horse equipment;<sup>327</sup> Timişoara–Cioreni-stray finds and grave “A”;<sup>328</sup> Voiteni – grave 3 and 6.<sup>329</sup>

According to the available data, 76 graves or stray finds are known that can be classified as horse burials or its varieties (from 35 sites). In the large cemetery at Alba Iulia the available data sources differ in giving the number of horse burials.<sup>330</sup>

Based on the available data, there were 21 stray finds (from 12 sites), in 13 graves the type of horse burial is unknown, because careless excavation and/or documentation, 7 graves were disturbed or ravaged thus the find was not “in situ”, 4 graves are unpublished, but we have information on them, and only in 31 cases the situation is documented or well-documented. This situation enables us to classify the horse burial type. In other five cases we had to rely on information, because these are unpublished.

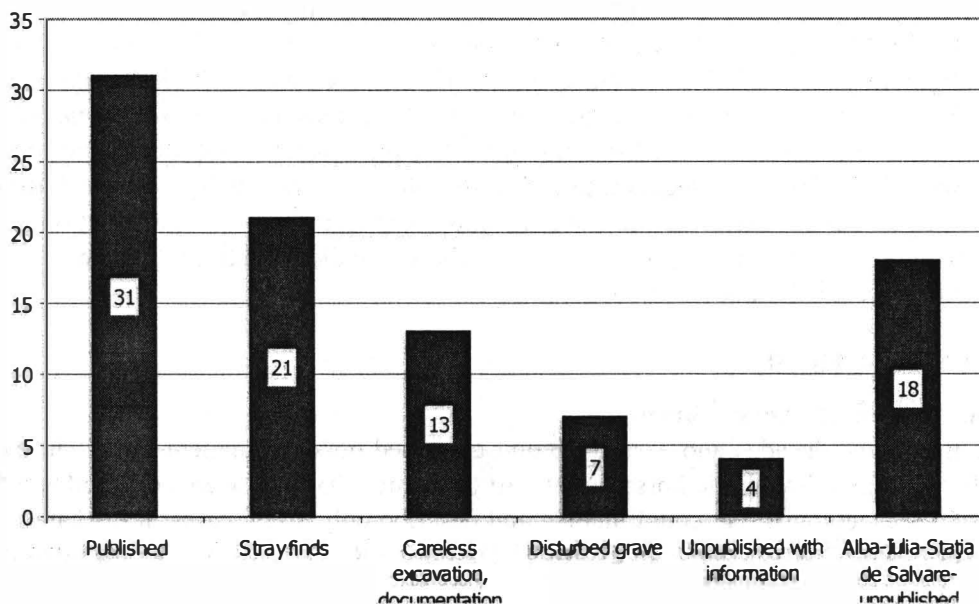


Figure 10

The 76 horse burials were recovered from 35 sites, and 19 sites could be reliably classified into one of the horse burial types.

#### *The regional distribution of the horse burials*

In the *Banat* region, 25 horse burials were recovered from 14 sites. In eight of these cases only horse tackle was buried,<sup>331</sup> in three cases *horsehide burial at the legs* was documented.<sup>332</sup> 14 cases could

reclassified by Székely as arrowheads, or fragments of stirrups, and a lance. The grave was dated by Kiss Attila to the late Avar period or the turn of 10th–11th centuries. Thus the dating of the grave recovered at Sfântu-Gheorghe to that century is debatable. It should be noted that there is no grave belonging to this type known from either the Hun or the late Avar period in southern Transylvania, but we do know the finds, if stray, at Eresteghin, which were dated unambiguously to the 10th–11th centuries. Furthermore, the stray finds at Jigodin, although even further to the north, give further support to the 10th–11th centuries dating of the finds at Szentgyörgy. Székely, 1945, 1–15; Kiss, 1985.

<sup>327</sup> Pinter, Luca, 1995, pl. 6; pl. 8; pl. 10; pl. 7; pl. 11; CCArh., 2002, 2003, 2004.

<sup>328</sup> Three pieces of stray stirrups, brought to the Museum by working men suggest at least 2 horse burials, as well as the symbolic horse burial in grave “A”. Rădulescu, Gáll, 2001, fig. 2, 1–3., fig 3, 12–13.

<sup>329</sup> Medeleţ, Tănase, Gáll, 2001, pictures 3 and 7.

<sup>330</sup> The excavators mention a few. It is certain, also attested by pictures, that there were at least 3 horse burials. The data of R.R. Heitel, that came down to us from his notes, lists 8 horse burials, which sounds likely.

<sup>331</sup> Hodoni – grave 3; Dudeştii Vechi–Hunca Mare-mound VI, Sânpetru German-G.A.S. premises, Dudeştii Vechi-mound IV – grave 1; Dudeştii Vechi-Hunca Mare-mound VI.; Dudeştii Vechi–Dragomir mound – grave 4; Timişoara-Cioreni – grave “A”; Vejte – grave 3 and 6.

<sup>332</sup> Hodoni – grave 17; Dudeştii Vechi-mound III.; Dudeştii Vechi-mound IV – grave 2.

not be classified, because seven of them are unpublished, the data being either inaccessible or not well documented,<sup>333</sup> seven cases were stray or disturbed finds.<sup>334</sup>

In *Crișana* the structure of the cemeteries where horse burials were found is different. The 40 horse burials were recovered from 11 sites. 11 of these cases were horse tackle burials,<sup>335</sup> three of them *horsehide burials at the legs*.<sup>336</sup> In 25 cases, horse burials are only attested by insufficient finds, 15 of them being stray finds,<sup>337</sup> and in 10 cases, amateurish excavations have deprived us of any information necessary for classification,<sup>338</sup> two graves could not be classified because they were robbed.<sup>339</sup>

What is most noteworthy about the horse burials in Transylvania is that they are concentrated to only a few sites, especially South Transylvania and around Cluj-Napoca. North Transylvania is represented by the burials discovered at Cluj-Napoca; stray finds or a small number of disturbed graves on the other hand represent East Transylvania. Thus, we have information on 20 horse burials from 12 sites, and an unknown number of cases in the large cemetery at Alba Iulia. Seven of these cases are classified as symbolic horse burials.<sup>340</sup> Four cases can be classified as *horsehide burials at the legs*.<sup>341</sup> A specific phenomenon in Transylvania, unknown in the other regions, is the *burial of stuffed horsehide*,<sup>342</sup> and in two instances *burial of folded horsehide*.<sup>343</sup> Unfortunately, unprofessional documentation, similarly to the other regions, is frequent. In five cases, we have stray finds,<sup>344</sup> and in further four cases the graves were disturbed, therefore we have no information on them.<sup>345</sup> The situation at Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare deserves special interest, because the contradictory information makes it even more difficult to achieve a coherent description.

## Types of horse burials

### Group 1: symbolic horse burials

More than three decades ago, Csanád Bálint classified horse equipment burials in the first major group of his typology of symbolic horse burials. At that time, 105 finds were collected and described by the Hungarian archaeologist. He could include and describe only a few cases in his catalogue from the present day Romania.<sup>346</sup> Only one site, that of Șiclău on the Romanian side was included (six symbolic horse burials).

Symbolic horse burials, group I in Bálint's system, were discovered in a region of approximately 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> and are the following:

1. Deva–Mikro – grave 15–7.<sup>347</sup>
2. Hodoni – grave 3.<sup>348</sup>

<sup>333</sup> Ermény, Comloșu Mare-I; Comloșu Mare-Posztoszállás; Dudeștii Vechi-mound V, VII, and VIII; Vizsed.

<sup>334</sup> Stray finds: Perjámos-Régi Posta Street, Timișoara-Ciorenii-finds from 2 graves (3 stirrup irons); Săcălaz. Fönlak. Disturbed graves with horse bones: Nădlac-grave „A”; Teremia Mare–Stock Kristóf land.

<sup>335</sup> Tărian-grave 21 and 29; Șiclău-graves 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

<sup>336</sup> Tărian – grave 28; Salonta – grave 2; Șiclău – grave 1.

<sup>337</sup> Bihar–stray finds; Sântandrei–stray finds; Vârșand–stray finds suggesting 2 graves; Șiclău–1 example; Măscuța–stray finds suggesting 7 horse burials; Curtuișeni–1 example; Pecica–stray finds suggesting 2 horse burials.

<sup>338</sup> Biharea–Șumuleu – graves 1–8; Vârșand – grave 33; Nădlac – grave „A”.

<sup>339</sup> Tărian – grave 36 and 38.

<sup>340</sup> Deva – grave 7; Orăștie – 6, 7, 18, 26, and 2 more graves recovered in 2003. Grave 18 and 26 and the two recovered in 2003 are unpublished.

<sup>341</sup> Alba Iulia–Roman Catholic Cathedral – one grave on its own (?), Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – graves 1 and 6; Blandiana-C.

<sup>342</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street, grave 10.

<sup>343</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street, grave 9 and Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street, grave 25.

<sup>344</sup> Jigodin, Ciuc Sângiorgi, Ereșteghin, Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 8.

<sup>345</sup> Alba Iulia–Castle-south-western part; Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street–grave 11; Sfântu-Gheorghe–Epreștet.

<sup>346</sup> Bálint, 1969, 107–114.

<sup>347</sup> Horedt, 1986, pl. 39.

<sup>348</sup> Bejan, Moga, 1979, fig. 3/2.

3. Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – graves 21, 29.<sup>349</sup>
4. Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises – a single grave.<sup>350</sup>
5. Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – grave 4.<sup>351</sup>
6. Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare–VI Mound.<sup>352</sup>
7. Șiclău – 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.<sup>353</sup>
8. Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – 6, 7, 18,<sup>354</sup> 26,<sup>355</sup> two more graves recovered in 2003.<sup>356</sup>
9. Timișoara–Cioreni – grave “A”.<sup>357</sup>
10. Voiteni – grave 3 and 6.<sup>358</sup>

These horse burials can be classified according to the piece of horse tackle found in the grave:

**1 a. Saddle, bridle in the grave:** Hodoni – grave 3; Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises – single grave; Șiclău – graves 2, 8, 10, 11, 12; Orăștie – graves 7, 18, 26; Voiteni – grave 3.

1. *position*–the stirrup on the right shin-bone, the bit 50 cm from the left leg: Hodoni–grave 3.

2. *position*: the bridle laying by the right side extending to the skull, where the bit was found, the saddle positioned at the right toes with the two stirrups: Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises – single grave.

3. *position*–in the feet area: Șiclău – 2, 10.

4. *position*–at the half of the left shin-bone: Șiclău – graves 11, 12.

5. *position*–on the left knee, at the end of the right leg: Orăștie – grave 7.

6. *position*–the stirrups at the end of the left leg, the bit on the right shinbone: Orăștie – grave 18.

7. *position*: two girth buckles, a *pear-shaped iron stirrup* by the right leg, another stirrup iron under the left shinbone, an iron bit, badly corroded in the foot-space, higher in the grave fill: Voiteni–grave 3.

**1 b. Saddle in the grave (the two stirrups were found):** Deva–Mikro grave 15–7; Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound–grave 4; Șiclău–grave 9; Timișoara–Cioreni–grave “A”.

1. *position*: by the legs:<sup>359</sup> Timișoara–Cioreni–grave “A” 1.

2. *position*: two stirrups approx. 20 cm higher than the middle part of the thighbone: Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound–grave 4.

3. *position*: at the end of the left leg: Șiclău–grave 9.

**1 c. Bridle in the grave:** the bit and the girth buckle were found: Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș–21, Orăștie–grave 6; Voiteni–grave 6.

1. *position*: the bit and girth buckle at the end of the left leg: Șiclău–grave 7.<sup>360</sup>

2. *position*: the bit left of the left toes, the girth buckle at the right toes: Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș–21.

3. *position*: the bit at the end of the right toes: Orăștie–Dealul Pomilor – grave 6.

4. *position*: the girth buckles by the left knee, the bit by the toes: Voiteni – grave 6.

Although the number of cases is small, it can be observed that in most of them the whole horse tackle was deposited in the grave. In some cases only the saddle (that is why only one stirrup or both were found), and in four cases only the bridle (only the securely documented cases have been considered); it is also possible that the saddles were equipped with wooden stirrups, which disappeared without a trace due to the soil condition.

<sup>349</sup> Lakatos, 2004. (in print).

<sup>350</sup> Dörner, 1970, 457.

<sup>351</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>352</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>353</sup> Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 707–709, fig. 2–4.

<sup>354</sup> The finds of the unpublished grave: 2 hair rings, stirrups (at the end of the left leg), a bit with bone side-sticks (on the shin-bone of the right leg), quiver, arrowheads, simple axe, iron parts of sabre-tache. CCArh, 2001, 223.

<sup>355</sup> CCArh, 2002, 223.

<sup>356</sup> CCArh, 2003.

<sup>357</sup> Rădulescu, Gáll, 2001, fig. 3, 12–13.

<sup>358</sup> Medeleț, Tănase, Gáll, 2001, fig. 3; fig. 7.

<sup>359</sup> More precise information is missing.

<sup>360</sup> Dörner, 1962, 707.

In most cases, the saddle and/or the bridle were placed near the legs. In only one case (Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises) the bit, decorated bridle and other straps were positioned by the skull, or right of the upper part of the body.

### ***Horse bones in the grave:***

In his typology of horse burials Csanád Bálint classified the graves with horse bones in the second major group. He classified the positions of horse bones into four groups, three of which are represented in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat as well. At that time, he knew only the burials of Biharea, Nădlac, Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya and Sfântu Gheorghe–Epreștető in the studied region. The burials at Biharea and Szentgyörgy were classified in the second group; the burials at Cluj-Napoca were classified in the third and fourth groups.

Unfortunately, because of disturbance, we do not know the exact position of horse bones in the graves found at Biharea – graves 1–8, Nădlac – grave „A”, Sfântu Gheorghe–Epreștető.

### **Group 2: horsehide burials at the legs:**

This is the best-represented group in the Carpathian basin, and in the region under study. Nine cases can be securely classified in this group. To them, following the available descriptions, nine doubtful cases could be added.

Apart from the fact that these cases belong to group II according to the horse burial typology system of Csanád Bálint, a few subtypes can be distinguished:

1. *position:* the horse skull by the left shinbone, on the two horse shank bones: Hodoni – grave 17.<sup>361</sup>

2. *position:* the horse skull on the left shinbone, reaching the knees of the skeleton: Dudeștii Vechi-mound III.<sup>362</sup>

3. *position:* the horse skull, facing west, at the end of shinbones, the horse shank bones underneath the horse skull: Arad–Ceala – grave X and probably Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș – grave 28.<sup>363</sup>

4. *position:* the horse skull at the end of the right toes, the horse shank bones underneath the horse skull: Șiclău – grave 1.<sup>364</sup>

5. *position:* the four horse shank-bones at the legs of the skeleton, the horse skull facing north: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 1.<sup>365</sup>

6. *position:* at the end of the left shinbone, to the left, four horse shank bones, from the half of the thighbone to the elbow, a horse skull facing west: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 6.<sup>366</sup>

7. *position:* horse skull by the left shinbone, the horse shank-bones by the right shinbones: Salonta–Testholom – grave 2.

To this group belong also the following cases, although we the exact position cannot be determined:

1. *Biharea – grave 1–8:* according to the excavator's description, the horse skull was placed by the end of the legs of the skeleton.<sup>367</sup>

2. *Dudeștii Vechi-IV mound – grave 2:*<sup>368</sup> a decayed horse skull at the legs.

3. *Blandiana “C” – single grave.*<sup>369</sup>

<sup>361</sup> Brasovean, Teicu, Muntean, 1996, 37, pl. LX.

<sup>362</sup> “it was placed on the left leg in such a position that the incisors almost touched the knee-cap.” Kisléghi N.Gy., 1904.420.

<sup>363</sup> Lakatos, 2004 (in print).

<sup>364</sup> “At the legs of the skeleton”. Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 707.

<sup>365</sup> Kovács I., 1942, tab. I.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibidem*, 1942, 98–103, pl. III, 28–43, pl. IV, pl. V, 1–9.

<sup>367</sup> Karácsony, 1903, 407.

<sup>368</sup> “The horse skull at the legs badly decayed, with two coffin bones”. Kisléghi, 1907, 276.

<sup>369</sup> The finds being unpublished, I give here the original of the site record of the excavator, Amlacher Eberhart, an amateur archaeologist: 24. 07. 1977 “În malul stâng al Mureșului, la cca. 80–100 m. în josul Brodului, am descoperit oase umane (antebraț). Două scobituri în pământul malului trădau că acolo s-a scormonit.”

In the eight positions outlined above the horse, bones were placed at the left leg, in some of the cases at the end of the shinbones. Only in one case was the horse skull found on the left, the horse shank bones on the right side. The horse burial in grave 6 at Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street was classified in these groups; in our opinion it is a mixture of group II and IV.

### Group 3: stuffed horse-hide burials

In Transylvania, Crișana and Banat there is only one known case that belongs here. The large number of badly documented graves, could, of course, have contained a few more cases, but we do not have information about them.

1. position: the horse skull at the left side of the skull of the warrior and the front two horse shank bones, also the rear shank bones at the end of the grave: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street, grave 10<sup>370</sup>.

### Group 4: folded horsehide

1. position: a horse skull by the left leg, by the pelvis, and four shank bones: Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street – grave 25;<sup>371</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – grave 9.<sup>372</sup>

The position of horse bones in grave 33 at Vărșand–Laposhalom cannot be determined, but according to the excavator's description, it is probable that they are to be classified in this group.<sup>373</sup>

In summary, in the region under study all types of horse burials are represented, except for group V in the system of Cs. Bálint

Proportionally, the most highly represented type is the symbolic horse burial (25 securely classified cases from 10 sites). They were found mostly in the southern parts of the region: eight burials from seven sites in Banat, 14 symbolic burials from 2 sites from Crișana, from the region between the Criș and Mureș rivers, and two cases from Tărian, on the right-hand side of the Crișul Repede River. In Transylvania, by the river Mureș in Southern Transylvania, there are seven symbolic horse burials from two sites (see the map 9).

As to the geographical distribution, the *horse burials of group II* occur everywhere. Cases securely classified in this group are evenly distributed in the Banat (three burials from 2 sites), in the region between the Mureș and Crișul Alb rivers (2 burials from 2 sites), in the region between the Crișul Repede and Crișul Negru rivers (1 site–1 burial), and on the right side of the Crișul Repede (1 site–1 burial). It is represented in the cemeteries of Cluj-Napoca in Northern Transylvania (1 site–2 cases), and there are two burials at Alba Iulia and Blandiana "C" in the region of the Middle Mureș. Our classification is tentative; the great variety of horse bone positions calls for further research, that would include, of course, the horse burials of the whole of the Carpathian basin.

Group III and IV are represented only in Northern Transylvania, in Cluj-Napoca, from two sites. Group III comprises grave 10 at Zápolya Street, whereas grave 9 at the same site belongs to group IV, as well as the unpublished grave 25 at Pata Street. In our opinion, this situation can be accounted for by the state of the research.

25.07.1977. "Am săpat malul abrupt de sus în jos până la schelet. Craniul și o parte a cutiei toracice au prezentat urme de deranjare. De la mijloc scheletul a fost intact. Poziția: culcat pe spate, orientare: V-E. Fără inventar funerar, decât craniul și membrele anterioare ale unui cal, la picioarele scheletului uman. Cât am putut, am fotografiat. Va fi vorba de un mormânt avar; maghiar din timpul cuceririi sau încă slav sau protobulgar (cultura Carpato-Balcanică)? Secolul 9–10."

28.07.1977. "În 28.07.1977. am plecat la Cluj, la profesorul Dr. Kurt Horedt și i-am comunicat descoperirea. Dânsul a fost surprins, fiindcă în șanțurile săpate de dânsul acolo, nu a făcut descoperiri de schelete umane. Mi-a propus a depune scheletul la Orăștie, de unde M. Blăjan de la muzeul din Alba Iulia îl va putea prelua pentru cercetare."

<sup>370</sup> László, 1945, pl. I.

<sup>371</sup> With due thanks to Hica Câmpeanu for the grave sketches.

<sup>372</sup> Bóna, 1988, 193–227.

<sup>373</sup> Popescu, 1956, 130.

### **The archaeological context of the horse burials**

Based on the available data horse burials are known from different types of cemeteries.

In the western part of *Banat*, these are documented in small family burials and in single burials;<sup>374</sup> one exception is Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound, where the 25 graves known to date suggest a large cemetery. It is debate whether the phenomenon documented in the eastern part of the region is the same or not. The cemeteries at Hodoni, Timișoara and Voiteni are large, as far as we can judge from the graves recovered at different parts of these cemeteries. The difference might be a chronological one.

In *Crișana*, the situation is markedly different. The sites on the right side of the Mureș River suggest small cemeteries; but on the other hand, this does not hold for the sites north of it. While the grave recovered from Arad–Ceala, the stray Carolingian sword, and the grave at Nădlac, the latter in the process of being analysed, could not have belonged to large cemeteries, the four stirrups at Pecica must have come from a cemetery containing a large number of graves. The cemetery at Șiclău, with an estimate of 20–50 graves, of which 12 graves are known, is a medium size one; the cemetery at Vărșand contained hundreds of graves. The two graves at Salonta may have belonged to a small cemetery, as well as the finds made at Sântandrei. The cemetery at Tărian resembles the cemetery at Șiclău, the difference between the two being that the former came into use again in the second half of the 11th century. The cemetery at Biharea, containing eight graves, resembles very closely those that contain a large number of horse burials, dated to the first half of the century. The burials from which only stray finds were made cannot be securely classified (Biharea–Cetate, Curtuișeni).

In Transylvania, horse burials were recovered from single graves, medium size cemeteries and large cemeteries with hundreds of graves. The grave discovered in the southwestern part of Alba Iulia–Castle belongs in the first group, *i.e.*, it was a single burial. The second group displays great variety, since this group comprises the wealthier (and definitely earlier) cemeteries (Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street and Pata Street), as well as the medium size cemeteries at Deva and Orăștie, that contained only symbolic horse burials.<sup>375</sup>

The cemetery at Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare, a large cemetery, with hundreds of graves, contained several horse burials, not yet classified because unpublished.

The archaeological context of the grave recovered at Alba Iulia–Roman Catholic Cathedral is unknown to date (probably a single grave). The archaeological context of stray finds is naturally undocumented, thus the data on the graves discovered in Eastern and South-Eastern Transylvania are of little practical value. On the basis of these data it appears that the horse burials of Transylvania are most likely to occur in single burials or small or medium size cemeteries; excluding the finds at Alba Iulia. In summary, it can be stated that we have reliable information on five sites out of twelve in Transylvania.<sup>376</sup>

### ***The sex of the interred in horse burials (map 10)***

The sex of the interred in the burials, with the exception of the cases in Banat, is unknown. In most of the horse burials, however, the grave furnishings can be used to assess the sex of the interred.

In the region under study, and elsewhere in the Carpathian basin, a significant proportion of those buried with horse burials are weapon bearing men. Yet some of the horse burials in the eastern part of the Hungarian Plain were female burials. Drawing on the available data there seems to be no burials in Transylvania where the interred was a female. The excavated cemeteries, published and unpublished, contained horse burials with male skeletons, which explain the relatively low number of horse burials in Transylvania.

Female horse burials are represented especially in the region of the lower Mureș River: Sânpetru German, Teremia Mare. The site at Șiclăuș, near the Crișul Negru river, where horse burials are large in number, deserves special attention. Based on their finds, four horse burials from 12 contained a female skeleton. In the cemetery at Biharea, one of the eight burials contained a female skeleton.

<sup>374</sup> Dudeștii Vechi–mound III–VIII.; Vizejdia; Teremia Mare; Comloșu Mare. The burial recovered at the Sânpetru German–G.A.S. premises was a single grave.

<sup>375</sup> According to the excavators of the cemetery of Orăștie, the cemetery, fully excavated at its northern and western parts, contained an estimate of 60–70 graves.

<sup>376</sup> Alba Iulia–south-western part of the Fortress; Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street, Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street, Orăștie.

It appears from the finds of such graves that the women buried in this way were members of a wealthy group. The finds from grave 3 at *Biharea* were a hair ring, a spindle-whorl, wire bracelets, an earring of the Saltovo type, a pair of stirrups and clay vessels.

The horse burials further south are even more wealthily furnished. The finds from grave 1 at *Șiclău* include rosette decorated horse gear, bit and girth buckle. Grave 7 is even wealthier; the finds made here were rhomboid appliques, hair ring, wire bracelet and horse equipment. Grave 11 is likewise notably rich. The finds from this grave include 12 rosette caftan appliques, 16 rhomboid appliques and Saltovo-type earrings. The finds made in grave 9 were 15 heart-shaped pierced appliques, four appliques with pendants, rosette pressed applique, Saltovo-type earring.

The single grave at Sânpetru German, resembling grave 1 at *Șiclău*, is again relatively rich. It contained an earring with cast-bead row pendant, green paste and yellow glass beads, thin bronze plate, several white metal strips, three bronze buttons, 32 rosette horse harness appliques, 3 strap ends, 1 large rosette horse harness applique, two pear-shaped stirrups and a bit with side stick.

The finds made in the grave recovered in 1875 at *Teremia Mare* suggest a rich grave: a pair of earrings, 88 round spangles, quadratic appliques, square appliques and fragments of clay pots. The quantity of finds described here underpins the statement that horse burials were found in the richest female burials.

The cemeteries of Crișana and Banat are more conservative than those from Transylvania. The woman buried in grave 7 at *Șiclău* was not more richly furnished than the female burial in grave 10 at Gâmbaș.<sup>377</sup> In the grave at *Șiclău* the bridle was also buried (attested by the presence of the bit and the girth buckle), unlike in the grave at Gâmbaș. The same holds for graves 9 and 11. The differences in burial rituals are important. There may have been social differences (based on the furnishings) between the interred (in both of the cases horse bones were missing in the graves, probably there was no horse sacrifice),

The cemetery at Zăpolya Street in Cluj-Napoca is of special interest, because almost all of the male burials contained horse burials, whereas the female ones (5, 7) did not.

Even if not in a significant proportion, horse burials in female graves are documented in Crișana and Banat, quite unlike Transylvania.

Most of the horse burials were found in male graves (in some cases we even have the results of anthropological analyses).<sup>378</sup> In grave 3 and 17 at Hodoni *maturus* men were buried,<sup>379</sup> while the man in grave 3 at Voiteni was probably 50–60 years old. The skeleton in grave 6 belonged to a *maturus* man (31–40 years old).

Horse bones come mostly from male burials with weapons. Sabre,<sup>380</sup> sword,<sup>381</sup> bow,<sup>382</sup> quiver,<sup>383</sup> arrowheads,<sup>384</sup> axes<sup>385</sup> are typical finds in male burials. Not all of the horse/horse gear burials, however, contained weapons: the anthropologically assessed male burial in grave 3 at Hodoni contained horse gear

<sup>377</sup> Grave goods: two gilded earrings with bead pendants, four gilded, square-shaped cast appliques, a small quadratic applique, a bronze bracelet, 86 beads of various types. Roska, 1936, 164, picture 1.

<sup>378</sup> The anthropological analysis of grave 4 at Dudeștii Vechi-Dragomir mound is in progress.

<sup>379</sup> The age of the man in grave 3 was assessed between 31 and 40 years.

<sup>380</sup> Biharea-Șumuleu—grave 8; Cluj-Napoca-Zăpolya Street—grave 1, 6, 10; Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street—grave 25; Șiclău—grave 3.

<sup>381</sup> Bihar-Castle, Deva-Mikro—grave 15–7; Sfântu-Gheorghe-Epreșetod.

<sup>382</sup> Cluj-Napoca-Zăpolya Street-grave 8; Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street—grave 25; Nădlac—grave “A”; Vejte—grave 3.

<sup>383</sup> Arad-Ceala—grave X; Biharea-Șumuleu—grave 6, 7, 8; Deva-Mikro—grave 15–7; Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street—graves 4, 22, 25; Cluj-Napoca-Zăpolya Street, graves 1, 6, 8, 10, 11; Salonta—grave 2; Nădlac—grave „A”; Dudeștii Vechi-Dragomir mound—grave 4; Dudeștii Vechi-mound III, mound IV—grave 2; Șiclău—graves 2, 10, 12; Orăștie-Dealul Pemilor—graves X 2–18; Vejte—grave 3.

<sup>384</sup> Biharea-Șumuleu—graves 1–2, 4–8; Deva-Mikro—grave 15–7; Hodoni—grave 17; Vârșand-Laposhalom—grave 33; Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street—grave 25; Cluj-Napoca-Zăpolya Street—graves 6, 10, 11; Nădlac—grave “A”; Salonta—grave 2; Dudeștii Vechi-Dragomir mound—grave 4; Dudeștii Vechi-mound III., mound IV—grave 1 and 2; Dudeștii Vechi-mound VI.; Șiclău—graves 2, 10, 12; Orăștie-Dealul Pemilor X 2—graves 6, 7, 18, 22.

<sup>385</sup> Biharea-Șumuleu—grave 4; Orăștie-Dealul Pemilor—grave X 2–18; Alba Iulia-Stația de Salvare.

only. Not all of the male graves with horse burials necessarily contained weapons, and, *vice versa*, there are many weapon burials without horse bones. I list here the most important sabre burials without horse sacrifice. Grave 4 at Cluj-Napoca Zápolya Street, grave 4 and 22 at Pata Street, and the sabre burial at Blandiana did not contain horse bones. All these sabre burials without horse bones were recovered from Transylvania.

To date no explanation for this phenomenon has been offered. We may be right in our conjecture that this situation is due to the economic status of the communities living in the eastern part of the Hungarian Plain and in Transylvania in the Conquest Period (a natural continuation of the sites of the Hungarian Plain). The situation may be modified by other factors, such as the geographical setting, and the situation and social role of the Transylvanian communities in the 10th century Hungarian society.

### *Chronology of horse burials*

It is almost impossible to establish the chronological boundaries of horse burials in the Conquest Period. The relative chronology of the objects in the graves is of help, but we are hindered by the fact that we do not know of fully recovered graves, therefore many objects cannot be analysed in their contexts. We must therefore resort to the relative chronology of the objects.

As I have discussed elsewhere,<sup>386</sup> based on relative chronology, the earliest horse burials are the following: Biharea, Cluj-Napoca-Zápolya Street, Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street – grave 25 and probably Dudeştii Vechi-mound V. The first three cemeteries contained many weapon and, in accordance with pagan customs, horse burials; the latter contained the graves of two individuals, dated to the first third of the 10th century. The horse burials in the small cemeteries at Arad-Ceala, Teremia Mare, as well as that from the single burial at Sânpetru German, and probably the grave recovered in the SW part of the Castle at Alba Iulia in Transylvania are dated to the first half of the century.

The cemetery at Şiclău, where eight of the 12 graves contained horse burials, may be dated to the first half of the century, more closely to the second third of the century. The horse burial recovered from grave 2 at Salonta can also be dated to the second third of the century. On the basis of the relative chronology, the following sites and graves can be dated to the second half of the century: Vârşand-Laposhalom – grave 33; Hodoni – grave 17; Tărian; Dudeştii Vechi-Dragomir mound; Dudeştii Vechi-mound VI; Nădlac; Orăştie-Dealul Pemilor-X2; Timişoara-Ciorenii; graves recovered outside Voiteni; and the stray finds at Cetate in Biharea; Eresteghin; Curtuiuşeni; Mâsca.

Grave 7 from Deva and grave 3 from Hodoni are dated to the end of the century, even to the beginning of the 11th century.<sup>387</sup>

The horse burials or the remains thereof at Sântandrei, Pecica, Blandiana and Sfântu Gheorghe cannot be confidently dated. The chronology of the horse burials recovered from Alba Iulia-Stația de Salvare cannot be established, either.

Horse burials are documented throughout the whole of the 10th century in the studied region, extending to the beginning of the 11th century (Hodoni – grave 3). This burial custom, however, became less and less frequent in the period of the foundation of the medieval Hungarian Christian state.

I cannot conclude my description of horse burials in Transylvania, Crişana and Banat without discussing the theory of Karl Zeno Pinter on horse burials. According to Pinter, the conquering Hungarians (*i.e.*, the pagan) buried the horse bones along with the sabres, in a first phase, which he does not specify, later they gradually adapted Christianity. He goes on saying that the symbolic horse burials emerged as a transitional phase between paganism and Christianity (yet he fails to specify which period he means).<sup>388</sup> His theory relies on one single set of data: the graves discovered at Cluj-Napoca-Zápolya Street contained horse bones, whereas the cemetery at Orăştie contained only horse equipment. Then, in an attempt to support his theory, he goes on saying that, the first site contained only sabres, contrary to the site at Orăştie, where those were not represented.

<sup>386</sup> Gáll, 2001, 1–14; Gáll, 2004. (in print).

<sup>387</sup> The finds of grave 2 and 4 by the side of grave 3 include S shaped hair rings, and one and two coins respectively dating from the period of István I.

<sup>388</sup> Pinter, 1994–1996, 240.

Pinter's fallacy is the result of the "writing without research" method. Had he studied the symbolic horse burial finds made at Sânpetru German, Șiclău, Karos,<sup>389</sup> Ártánd,<sup>390</sup> Hencida<sup>391</sup> or Kenézlo,<sup>392</sup> he would have immediately realised that his theory is untenable. It is probable that for numerous reasons there was an increasing number of horse burials in the second half of the century.<sup>393</sup> But this is by no means a "transitional" period between paganism and Christianity; not only because such burials were found in graves dated to the first half of the century, unequivocally associated with paganism.<sup>394</sup>

The horse burials are a distinguishing characteristic of Conquest Period and they were found in a significant proportion in the graves of weapon-bearing men. At the turn of the 9th–10th centuries the horse burials were a distinguishing mark of the conquering Hungarians, whereas poorer burials represented the Slavic (some say Romanian) population. Similarly, the Hampel "A" group<sup>395</sup> was made up of "horsemen", as were much later the middle and upper social status groups of the Hungarian society in the Conquest Period.

It is certain that horse bone burials appeared (or reappeared) in the 10th century simultaneously with the coming of the Hungarian conquerors into the Carpathian basin. The theory that this custom (or at least the custom of horse equipment burial) was later adopted by other (Slavic, Bulgarian-Slavic) populations cannot be proved nor disproved with methods at our disposal.

### Wrapping in horsehide

An unusual discovery is reported by Hica I Câmpeanu. Those interred in graves 4 and 15 at Pata Street in Cluj-Napoca were wrapped in horsehide. To judge whether this theory is acceptable, or to give archaeological examples or ethnographical sources is outside the scope of our study. We deemed it important, however, to mention this interpretation, although we have not found other examples.

## VIII. Food and drink offerings

An important phenomenon in burial customs is providing food and drink for the afterlife of the interred. This may have been the reason why clay vessels (to put the food or drink in) or animal bones (as a symbol of provision for the afterlife) were found frequently by the body of the interred in different positions in graves dating from the 10th, and even from the 11th centuries.

### VIII. 1. a. Pottery in the graves (*map 11; pl. 9: grave 28; pl. 10: grave 29; pl. 14: grave 46; pl. 17. 4)*

Pottery in the graves, probably containing food and drink, is quite common in the burials of the Conquest Period. The most typical find in 10th century pottery burials is a single clay pot; as opposed to the Bulgarian burial customs, where two clay pots in a grave are quite common (in the cemeteries of the Lower Danube region single clay pot finds were not less frequent).<sup>396</sup> The "Blandiana" type cemeteries in Transylvania are similar, where amphoras are associated with simple clay pot finds. Possibly the amphoras contained the food, and the beakers contained the drink.

This custom, which was thought at the beginning of the 20th to be a Slavic characteristic, occurred more and more frequently in burials dating from the 10th–11th centuries, which resulted in the rejection of this stereotype by A. Kiss 30 years ago.<sup>397</sup> Kiss pointed out in his analysis that pottery burials were not solely known from poorly furnished Slavic burials, but they were to be found at horse-weapon burials sites as well, even though such finds were not frequent.

<sup>389</sup> There are 5 burials at Karos: 13, 19, 25, 53, 63. Révész, 1996, 39, pl.: 21, 22, 36, 91, 106.

<sup>390</sup> Grave 206. Mesterházy, 1990, 50–57.

<sup>391</sup> Fettich, 1937, 95–101.

<sup>392</sup> Grave 34 and 39. Fettich, 1931, 88, 89–92, fig. 65–66.

<sup>393</sup> Bálint, 1969, 107–114.

<sup>394</sup> Pinter did not explain why and how he means to use this term, and how long the period is.

<sup>395</sup> Hampel, 1905.

<sup>396</sup> Fiedler Uwe's book is essential in this question. Fiedler, 1992.

<sup>397</sup> Kiss, 1969, 175–185.

There has been a considerable increase in the number of such finds since; even in the otherwise badly documented regions of Transylvania, Crișana and Banat, where the following sites contained pottery burials: Biharea–Middle of the Castle;<sup>398</sup> Biharea – grave 3;<sup>399</sup> Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street: 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 26 (2/1999), 28 (4/1999), 29 (5/1999), 46 (22/1999), 47 (23/1999), 55 (8/2001);<sup>400</sup> Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare (ca. 40 graves);<sup>401</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street (in 7 graves);<sup>402</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street: graves 2, 3, 5;<sup>403</sup> Blandiana “B”: grave 4, 9;<sup>404</sup> Tomnatic;<sup>405</sup> Teremia Mare;<sup>406</sup> Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – graves I and III;<sup>407</sup> Șeitin – grave 4;<sup>408</sup> Orăștie – grave 20, 24, 27 and three more graves recovered in 2003;<sup>409</sup> Zalău–Palvar – grave 9 (2/2001).<sup>410</sup>

Based on available data, pottery finds were extracted from 13 sites. It was the cemetery at Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare where pottery finds were largest in number.<sup>411</sup> The cemetery part at Brândușei Street contained a likewise significant number of pottery finds, with 12 vessels in 55 graves, which is 21.81%. The proportion of pottery finds is of a similar scale in the unpublished cemetery at Pata Street in Cluj-Napoca, where seven graves out of 26 contained pottery, which is 26.92% of the total. In Orăștie 6 graves of the 42 were furnished with pottery (14.58%). At Zăpolya Street in Cluj-Napoca, 3 graves out of the 11 discovered to date contained pottery (27.72%). In the rest of the sites pottery finds was much rarer. At Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound (10.5%, i.e., 2 out of 19) and Blandiana two out of the 15 graves (13.3%) contained vessels, at Biharea (8 graves), Șeitin (4 graves) and Zalău–Palvar (12 graves) this burial custom was represented in one grave.

In most of the cases, the content of the pots is unknown. There are only two cases where food was preserved: in the vessel recovered from grave 15 at Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street a boiled egg was preserved, whereas in the vessel in grave 3 at Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street pig bones were found. The fact that both these graves were child burials may also be of importance.

### *Distribution of pottery burials*

In *Crișana*, two pottery finds have been made to date from the sites at Biharea. The Lower Mureș region is likewise poor in finds, with one grave only at Șeitin. The situation in *Banat* is also interesting; here this custom was represented at the sites in the north-western region (*Tomnatic*, *Teremia Mare*, *Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound*), in the cemeteries in the eastern region this custom is unrepresented (Timișoara–Cioreni, Hodoni, Sânpetru German, Voiteni).

The situation in is completely different. The cemeteries excavated in this region were rich in pottery burials, quite contrary to the sites from Banat and Crișana, where only a few pottery finds were made. There were no pottery finds in large cemeteries such as Vârșand, Timișoara or in small cemeteries such as Hodoni, Voiteni and Șiclău.

In the cases from the sites in northern and southern Transylvania pottery finds were represented in large proportion. These burial sites differ considerably; the first group comprises small-medium size cemeteries with horse and weapon burials, whereas the second consists of huge poor cemeteries.

<sup>398</sup> Before 1862 there was a grave find, which contained fragments of an X-type sword, a pair of stirrups and a vessel. Horedt, 1968, 422–428.

<sup>399</sup> Karácsonyi, 1903, 67, 5. fig. 1.

<sup>400</sup> Drămbăreanu, Rodean, Gligor, Moga, Anghel, 1998, 188, fig. I, a–b., fig. II a–b, fig. III. a–b; Dragotă, Brânda, 2000, 294, pl. IV, 2: grave 2; grave 4: 2, grave 5, 300, pl. VIII, grave 22: 1; CCArh, 2002, 34.

<sup>401</sup> Heitel, 1994–1995, 418; Ciugudeanu, 1996, 9.

<sup>402</sup> By courtesy of Ioana Hica Câmpăneanu, oral information.

<sup>403</sup> Kovács I., 1942, 92, 97–98.

<sup>404</sup> Horedt, 1966, 277, 18, fig. 21.

<sup>405</sup> Kühn, 1911, 183.

<sup>406</sup> Hampel, 1900, 667–671; Nagy, 13, 1893, 223–234.

<sup>407</sup> Tănase, Bejan, Gáll, Kalciov, 2004 (in print).

<sup>408</sup> Mărghită, 1965, 582.

<sup>409</sup> CCArh, 2002; CCArh., 2003.

<sup>410</sup> Băcșuț-Crișan, S., Băcșuț-Crișan, D, 2003, 41, 72, tab.2.

<sup>411</sup> 40, according to R. Heitel.

However, the weapon-bearing group is represented in the cemeteries from Cluj-Napoca, Pata Street and Zápolya Street, from Orăștie, and those from Stația de Salvare, Brândușei Street and Izvorul Împăratului in Alba Iulia, on the other hand, contained no horse-weapon burials.

#### *Position of pottery in the graves*

The position of pottery in relation to the body displayed great variety.

- I. At the right side of the skull: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street grave 55 (8/2001).
- II. At the left side of the skull: Orăștie – grave 24, 27 and three graves excavated in 2003, Zalău–Palvar – grave 8.
- III. By the right shoulder: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street grave 9, Zalău–Palvar – grave 9 (2/2001).
- IV. Above the right shoulder: Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare – grave 12.
- V. In the head area: Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare–cemetery III.
- VI. By the pelvis: Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare–cemetery III.
- VII. By the left thigh-bone: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street, graves 15, 16; Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor – grave 20.
- VIII. By the end of the right leg: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street grave 3, 5; Cluj-Napoca-Pata Street (apparently at the same position in all the 7 graves).
- IX. By the end of the left leg: Blandiana – grave 4.
- X. At the feet: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street grave 2; Șeitin–grave 4; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare; Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului.
- XI. By the feet: Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului.<sup>412</sup>

The position of pottery is unknown in several cases, either because the graves were disturbed, or because the finds were brought to the Museum as stray finds: Biharea–Fortress; Șumuleu; Blandiana “B” – grave 9; Tomnatic, Teremia Mare.

#### *Sex assessment, archaeological context and chronology of pottery-furnished burials*

In most of the cases, the question of sex assessment can be resolved by means of anthropological analysis. When such research is lacking, we must be content with an archaeological sex assessment. In some of the cases the grave-furnishings can be used in sexing the burial, as in grave 3 from Biharea, grave 5 from Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street and in Teremia Mare, which are female burials. In other cases the sex assessment is certain on the grounds of weaponry (Biharea–Castle: fragments of sword, stirrup; Blandiana–“B” – grave 4: arrowheads, iron buckle – male graves). It is probable that the male burials in the graves at Pata Street contained pottery.<sup>413</sup> In some of the cases, the sex assessment is purely conjectural: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street grave 2. In a few cases, the size of the skeleton indicates that the interred was a child: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street graves 13, 14, 15; Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare;<sup>414</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street grave 3. The anthropological analysis has been made in one case only, that being grave 55 at Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street (8/2001), which was a female burial.

The rest of the pottery burials could not be classified. Most of them were poorly furnished (plain hair rings, pear-shaped hair rings, open round wire ring, closed spiral, wire bracelet, beads) or without any furnishings at all<sup>415</sup> (see plate 3).

It may be stated that one extant example of provision for the afterlife was recovered from a poorly furnished grave. This, however, cannot be generalized, since the grave at Teremia Mare is probably the richest female grave in the region under study. It is, nevertheless, unrepresented in other, richer female graves (Sânpetru German, Șiclău – graves 1, 7, 9, 11).

<sup>412</sup> The cemetery is unpublished, therefore the exact position cannot be established.

<sup>413</sup> It is certain because according to the information provided by the excavator there are 19 male, 6 female and one child burials known. It was Ioana Hica again who documented that pottery was found in 7 graves, all of which were found at the right end of the legs. Information courtesy of Ioana Hica.

<sup>414</sup> Heitel R.R. mentions in his notes 4 child burials with pottery finds.

<sup>415</sup> Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – graves 9, 29, 46, 47; Dudeștii Vechi–Șeitin – grave 4; Zalău–Palvar – grave 9.

At the same time, it can be noticed that this custom is unrepresented to date in bow and weapon male burials from Crişana and Banat. If R. R. Heitel, who cites one vessel, horse and weapon burial at Alba Iulia–Staţia de Salvare, was right, and if the pottery found in male weapon burials from Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street, then this custom can be documented.<sup>416</sup>

It holds for other regions of the Carpathian basin that pottery finds were scarce if any in weapon-horse burials,<sup>417</sup> notwithstanding the fact that these cemeteries otherwise contained a copious amount of pottery burials, mostly in poorly furnished graves, as was mentioned above.

The great amount of pottery finds discovered in poor cemeteries, an observation also valid for the burial customs at the sites of the Lower Danube region,<sup>418</sup> should be emphasised.

The most important statement to be made is that all the burials at hand are dated to the pagan period. This custom appears with the conquering Hungarians, but the indigenous population had practised it as well. It is known from a small number of sites of the Eastern Plain and insignificantly in a larger proportion of sites of Transylvania.

Pottery finds are not known from cemeteries securely dated to the 11th century. It remains to be solved whether the lack of representation in the Eastern Banat region is due to chronological reasons or to different practices.

#### *VIII.1. b. Bucket burial*<sup>419</sup>

There is one case known from the studied region: the burial at Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street–grave 25. Although the material is unpublished, I have seen the sketches of the grave by courtesy of the excavator and I have drawn my own sketches of some of the finds.

As opposed to pottery burials, this was a rich male weapon and horse burial: sabre, bow, quiver, arrowheads, and lyre-shaped buckle, sabre-tache ornamented with appliques, pear-shaped stirrups, bit and horse bones. The position of the preserved iron bands is unknown. Based on its furnishing, this is the richest grave of the cemetery, beside grave 4 and 22, which contained a sabre and a belt ornamented with appliques.

This burial is the only one of this in Transylvania. If we examine the geographical distribution of bucket burials in the Carpathian basin, we can see that one concentration point is the southwestern region of Felvidék (Csekej; Komáromszentpéter–Kisrét hill – grave 61; Nyitra–Zoborhegy),<sup>420</sup> the other is the Dunántúl (Halimba–Cseres; Székesfehérvár Castle–Demkóhegy; Székesfehérvár Castle–Rádiótelep).<sup>421</sup> There are two sites known at the Danube bend, and one in the western part of the Plain (Üllő – grave 6). The rich grave referred to as Zemplin–Malomoldal in North-East is a single grave, as well as the find made at Cluj-Napoca.

There is no regularity whatsoever in these burials. There are graves of weapon-bearing men, some buried with a sabre (Zemplin; Cluj-Napoca), some are buried with a sword (Komáromszentpéter), or with a plain quiver and arrowheads (Üllő – grave 6). The custom is represented in female burials as well (Halimba–Cseres; Szob–Kiserdő; Szob–Vendelin).

As to their chronology, as emphasised by other archaeologists,<sup>422</sup> the immediate context of the grave should be examined. In my opinion, there is nothing to link these cases with the distant ones at Csekej or Komáromszentpéter. Despite the fact that the sites in the Dunántúl cannot be unquestionably dated to the beginning of the century, in the case of the finds made at Cluj-Napoca I do not think this dating problematic; yet a decisive move forward can only be made when the colleagues in Romania publish this cemetery, after a delay of many decades.

<sup>416</sup> Heitel, 1994–1995, 413.

<sup>417</sup> Kiss, 1969, 175–182.

<sup>418</sup> Fiedler, 1992.

<sup>419</sup> It should be noted that the bucket burial recorded at Zápolya Street by Sarolta Tettamanti is non-existent. Tettamanti, 1975, map 11.

<sup>420</sup> Dušek, 1964, 197–222.; Fehér, Éry, Kralovský, 1962, no. 741.

<sup>421</sup> Török, 1962, pl. XXI, 1; Bakay, 1965–1966, 56, 60; Bakay, 1978, 34, 58, pl. XVIII.

<sup>422</sup> Révész especially.

## VIII. 2. *Animal bones (map 12)*

Food burial, as provision for the afterlife, represented beside pottery by animal bones should be interpreted as a ritual. Unlike pottery, present mostly in poorly furnished and child burials, the graves with animal bone, as we will see, were discovered in different contexts. The number of food finds must have been significantly larger, including for example graves where the food decayed without a trace. It should also be borne in mind that the finds excavated at the beginning of the last century may have contained more animal bones that were sadly overlooked. Unfortunately, many of the sites of this period are unpublished (two important of them: Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street and Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare), or even if they are published, as for example Nădlac from Biharea, graves A-M at Timișoara–Cioreni, etc. we cannot confidently say that the graves contained no animal bones (other than horse bones).

Sarolta Tettamanti collected the meat burials thirty years ago. In Transylvania, Crișana and Banat there were only two cases, in spite of the fact that the cemetery at Șiclău, rich in animal bone burials, had been published, and the animal bone burials at Dudeștii Vechi–mound III had been known for half a century.<sup>423</sup> She mentions only the finds from the cemetery at Zăpolya Street in Cluj-Napoca and the cemetery at Hodoni. The finds excavated since, and the animal bones discovered in the collection of Kisléghy need a fresh analysis.

Based on the analysis of the animal bones we may gain better knowledge about the species bred and used in the Conquest Period. The following animal bones have been recovered from the studied region:

1. *Sheep bones*: Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street (number of graves unknown);<sup>424</sup> Oradea–“În Vii” – graves 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5;<sup>425</sup> Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – grave 4;<sup>426</sup> Dudeștii Vechi–mound III;<sup>427</sup> Șiclău – graves 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11.<sup>428</sup>
2. *Sheep head*: Șiclău – grave 11.<sup>429</sup>
3. *Horse bones*: Hodoni – grave 3;<sup>430</sup> Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 4.<sup>431</sup>
4. *Pig bones*: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 3 (in the vessel);<sup>432</sup> Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare – single grave<sup>433</sup> (a molar).
5. *Fowl bones*: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 4; Cluj-Napoca–Pata Street (the number of the grave is unknown).
6. *Cattle bones*: Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare, mound VI (an incisor).<sup>434</sup>

### Geographical distribution

Up-to-date information on animal bones representing food offerings suggests that this custom was quite common. In the more carefully excavated cemeteries, it is known mainly from horse-weapon male burials, but this should not be generalized. It is only attributable to the state of the research that this custom is unrepresented in Southern Transylvania, and that the Bihor region is represented by only one site.<sup>435</sup> It is unclear why food-drink offering is unknown at Vârșand, not far from Șiclău, or why it is under-represented at sites at the eastern part of Banat.

<sup>423</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 108, map 10.

<sup>424</sup> Information provided by Ioana Hica.

<sup>425</sup> In grave 1: a woman; in grave 2: a 10-year old girl; in graves 3 and 4: two adults, in grave 5: a 4–5-year old boy was buried.

<sup>426</sup> Tănase, Bejan, Gáll, Kalcsov, 2004. (in print).

<sup>427</sup> Kisléghi, 1904, 420.

<sup>428</sup> Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 705–712.

<sup>429</sup> Rusu, Dörner, 1962, 709.

<sup>430</sup> Bejan, Moga, 1979, pl. 1–3.

<sup>431</sup> Kovács I., 1942, 95.

<sup>432</sup> *Ibidem*, 1942, 92.

<sup>433</sup> The animal bones discovered during the analysis of the Kisléghy legacy have been classified by Chivu Florentina. Timișoara Banat Museum. Inventory No: 3617.

<sup>434</sup> Museum of Banat (Timișoara. Inventory No: 3617.)

<sup>435</sup> This is evident because in the recently published Hungarian sites in Bihar this burial custom is represented by a great number of examples.

### Position in the grave

#### Sheep bones

1. 15 cm behind the skull: Dudeștii Vechi–Pusztă Bukova-mound III.<sup>436</sup>
2. On the right side by the skull: Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound – grave 4.
3. On the right side of the breast: Șiclău – grave 11.
4. At the end of the legs: Șiclău – grave 2.
5. At the end of the left leg: Șiclău – grave 7.
6. In the grave fill, on different levels: Șiclău – grave 3.
7. The position of the sheep bones are unknown: Șiclău – grave 8.

#### Horse bones:

1. At the right side of the head: Hodoni – grave 3.
2. 40–50 cm deep in the grave fill: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 4.

#### Pig bones:

1. Pig bones in vessel, at the end of the right leg: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 3.

#### Fowl bone:

1. One fowl bone under the right shoulder-bone and in a higher layer of the pit fill: Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street – grave 4.

### Sex assessment, archaeological context and chronology of graves with animal bones

The available data suggest that animal bones were characteristic in most of the cases (*viz.* 7) of male weapon-horse burials (at least symbolic horse burials). There is one example of sabre burial with animal bones (two horse shank-bones) (Cluj-Napoca–Zăpolya Street-grave 4-here apparently there was no ceremony of horse burial, the bones may have been deposited as offerings).<sup>437</sup> This custom is known mostly from graves with quiver and arrowhead finds (Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound; Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare–mound VI; Șiclău – grave 2, 8).

The custom is represented in female burials (3 graves), and in a child burial. All such female burials were recovered at Șiclău; they must have been members of a wealthy group; and based on their finds they can hardly be dated before the second third of the 10th century. It deserves special attention that in the rich female rosette horse gear burial found at Sânpetru German this custom is not present, unlike in grave 1 at Șiclău, where horse gear burial was found by the legs and sheep bones in the same area.

In the site Șiclău–Gropoie, contrary to previous data, and similarly to the sites from Hungary, this custom was documented in many female burials (exceeding the number of male burials).

This not so frequently occurring custom is chronologically characteristic of 10th century pagan burials. Based on the finds (Dudeștii Vechi–Hunca Mare, VI mound and grave 4 at Dudeștii Vechi–Dragomir mound) it seems certain that it dates to the second half of the 10th century.

I have to voice my reservations about the finds at Dudeștii Vechi. In graves excavated by Kisléghy incisor, molar and canine teeth from different animals were found. For the time being, these have been classified along with food finds, but these data should be treated cautiously. An analogous case: in cemetery II from Karos cattle jaw was found. This find is not interpreted.<sup>438</sup>

<sup>436</sup> Inventory No: 3656.

<sup>437</sup> In the literature it is regarded as a horse burial. We maintain, however, that the horse was deposited as food provision. Such finds are Debrecen-Józsa, Klastrompart – grave 22, where the horse bone was placed above the left shoulder. Nepper, 2002, 41.

<sup>438</sup> Révész, 1996, 192.

### VIII. 3. Eggs in the grave

In some of the graves dated to the 10th–11th centuries another type of food find were egg finds, interpreted by I. Fodor as a symbol of rebirth.<sup>439</sup> In the studied region this custom concentrated in the cemeteries of Alba Iulia. The sites are: Alba Iulia–Brândușei Street – grave 15 and 17;<sup>440</sup> Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului;<sup>441</sup> Alba Iulia–Stația de Salvare– cemetery III.<sup>442</sup>

In grave 15 in the Brândușei Street cemetery, a child burial, a boiled egg find was made in a vessel, in grave 17 raw eggs were found at the left shin of a 190 cm long skeleton. It is to be noted that grave 17 had limestone covering and a vessel. The finds from grave 15 were a vessel, hair rings and rings. Apart from their containing eggs, no information is available on the finds excavated from the other two sites.

This custom is known from many sites in the Carpathian basin; mostly from child burials,<sup>443</sup> but it is known from adult burials, even horse-weapon burials.<sup>444</sup> The custom is known from many other regions (e.g., the site at Izvoru in the Lower Danube region), which hints at the wide distribution of this custom, both geographically and chronologically. The chronology is supported by finds dated to the 10th and the 11th centuries.<sup>445</sup> Its absence from the other sites in Transylvania, Crișana and Banat can be attributed to the state of the research (many times the graves were not examined properly); nevertheless, it seems certain that this custom was not general.

### VIII. 4. Traces of fire in the graves

Available data show that this custom was practised both in the 10th and 11th centuries, being one of those customs that continued parallel with Christian customs. Sites: Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya Street – graves 1, 4; Moldovenesti; Șirioara (several graves).

### VIII. 5. Hearth

The oven at Gâmbaș is probably contemporaneous with the burial, where a horse skull and a rhomboid arrowhead were found. Other examples are documented from Conquest Period cemeteries in the Carpathian basin as well as from cemeteries dating to the early Árpád period. It is quite likely that the oven was used in preparing the food either taken during the burial ceremony or deposited in the grave. This find at Gâmbaș is important because there were no horse burials found in this site.

## IX. The problem of the continuation of 10th century burial rites into the 11th century (appendix 6)

The continuity of 10th–11th centuries burial rites has been treated extensively in the literature concerning the Conquest Period. According to the dominant views, pagan burial rites disappeared without a trace at the turn of 10th–11th centuries. A closer look on the finds of the region under study, however, may suggest otherwise. The change of custom may have been the result of a social change, but it may equally reflect a change of the preferred model. The location of the population, the cultural influences coming from different directions and affecting customs on different levels should be taken into consideration. In addition, these three regions developed differently in the 10th century, and even more so in the 11th; political unification, if any, did not begin before the 11th century.

<sup>439</sup> Fodor (ed.), *A honfoglaló magyarság. Kiállítási katalógus.*, 1996. 290.

<sup>440</sup> Drămbărean, Rodean, Gligor, Moga, Anghel, 1998, 188–189, 191.

<sup>441</sup> CCArh., 2002. 33.

<sup>442</sup> Blăjan, Popa, 1983, 377.

<sup>443</sup> Beside the 14 sites listed by Tettamanti there were other egg burials in child graves: Debrecen–Józsa, Klastropmart – grave 26; Püspökladány–Eperejesvölgy – graves 79, 196, 202, 450.

<sup>444</sup> Tettamanti, 1975.109.

<sup>445</sup> E.g., the Sârbogárd-Trinker farm and the cemeteries of the Tiszatardos-Reviczky estate have been dated to the first half of the 10th century. There is one egg burial I know of, coin-dated after 961, the one recovered at Szob-Kiserdő.

The regional differences are the most noticeable when we compare Transylvania and the other two regions. There is a further division to be made between the northern and southern parts of Transylvania.

The question is to what extent the burial customs of the 10th century could have survived into the 11th century. As pointed out earlier, the location of the finds is of extreme importance. It is likely that in the case of political centres, such as for example Alba Iulia, we cannot consider the burials in the 11th century to be pagan, as opposed to sites situated far from political centres (e.g., Vărşand–Laposhalom). At the newly founded bailiff centres, the old, pagan customs could not have been practised, as opposed to secluded settlements, where legal institutions could not have influenced daily life to a great extent.

As stated earlier, the political situation was also an important factor. It is a well-known fact that Saint István I wanted to go on eradicating pagan customs by all means available to a Christian ruler. Yet it is probable that the situation in Ajtony's 11th century political structure, in the present day Banat, could have imposed more tolerance. Old customs and traditions may have been preserved here undisturbed. The cemeteries excavated in this region, dated to the 10th–11th centuries, are to be interpreted in this context.

The archaeological finds give some support to the continuation of the above-mentioned burial customs in the region under study, yet there is one case where we can be certain that the 11th century dating is accurate; the symbolic horse burial in grave 3 at Hodoni–Pocioroane. Adjacent to this grave, at 1 m distance, were found grave 2 and 4 of a *maturus* and *adultus* female, respectively, coin-dated by a CNHI obolus of István I. The burials are dated to the first decades of the 11th century, therefore we may assume that the *maturus* male may have been buried in the same period.

Grave 7 at Deva is best dated to the 11th century, following the chronology of the sword types. This was a symbolic horse burial; the other finds made here were trapezoidal stirrup, parts of a quiver, arrow heads, a hair ring and a wire bracelet. The finds made in the rest of the graves of the cemetery, however, suggest a 10th century date. The available sample, with seven graves altogether (which are unpublished), does not allow any more complex consequences to be drawn.

Fire marks in the graves should be considered a pagan custom. I. Kovács has described the cemetery at Cluj-Napoca, somewhat resembling those of Moldoveneşti and Şirioara. Various stone structures continued to be used, but these cannot be considered a pagan custom.

Skull burial, another pagan custom, is also known from the 11th century (dated by a coin of Ladislás I) in the cemetery of Tărian.

In conclusion we may say that *pagan customs continued to be practised, if marginally, in the Christian period*. The decline in their usage was due to the spread of Christianity, which brought about a simplification of burial customs (as far as we can judge from the finds that have come down to our times), and a significant scarcity in grave furnishings as well.

## Conclusions

In the analysis of burial customs in Transylvania, Crişana and Banat we have pursued two goals:

1. To give a classification and a monographic description of more than a hundred years of excavations and research in this field.
2. To establish the exact relationship between the burial customs from these three regions. Our quest has been to identify the links between the studied region and the Carpathian basin. We believe that this problem should be in the focus of archaeological research of the Conquest Period and the Árpád period.

Most of the burial customs documented in Transylvania, Crişana and Banat are similar to those of other regions in the Carpathian basin. The choice of burial sites, the structure of cemeteries, the depth and orientation of graves, grave goods and the position of skeletons, all link these regions to those populated by steppe peoples. There is a marked difference in the type of cemeteries in Crişana and Banat, according to the configuration of the terrain. Cemeteries with a large number of graves were found mostly in Alba Iulia, the centre of Transylvania and in other later, 11th century, bailiff centres. In Banat, there are several small sizes, family burial sites (see map 1). This is also the region with a large number of prehistoric mounds containing graves or cemeteries.

There does not seem to be a difference in the arm positions (believed by some to be specific to Transylvania,<sup>446</sup> *i.e.*, eastern-orthodox), especially because different arm positions, thought to be characteristic of steppe and Byzantine peoples, are represented in equal proportion in the cemeteries. No significant difference in this regard could be observed between the studied region and other regions.

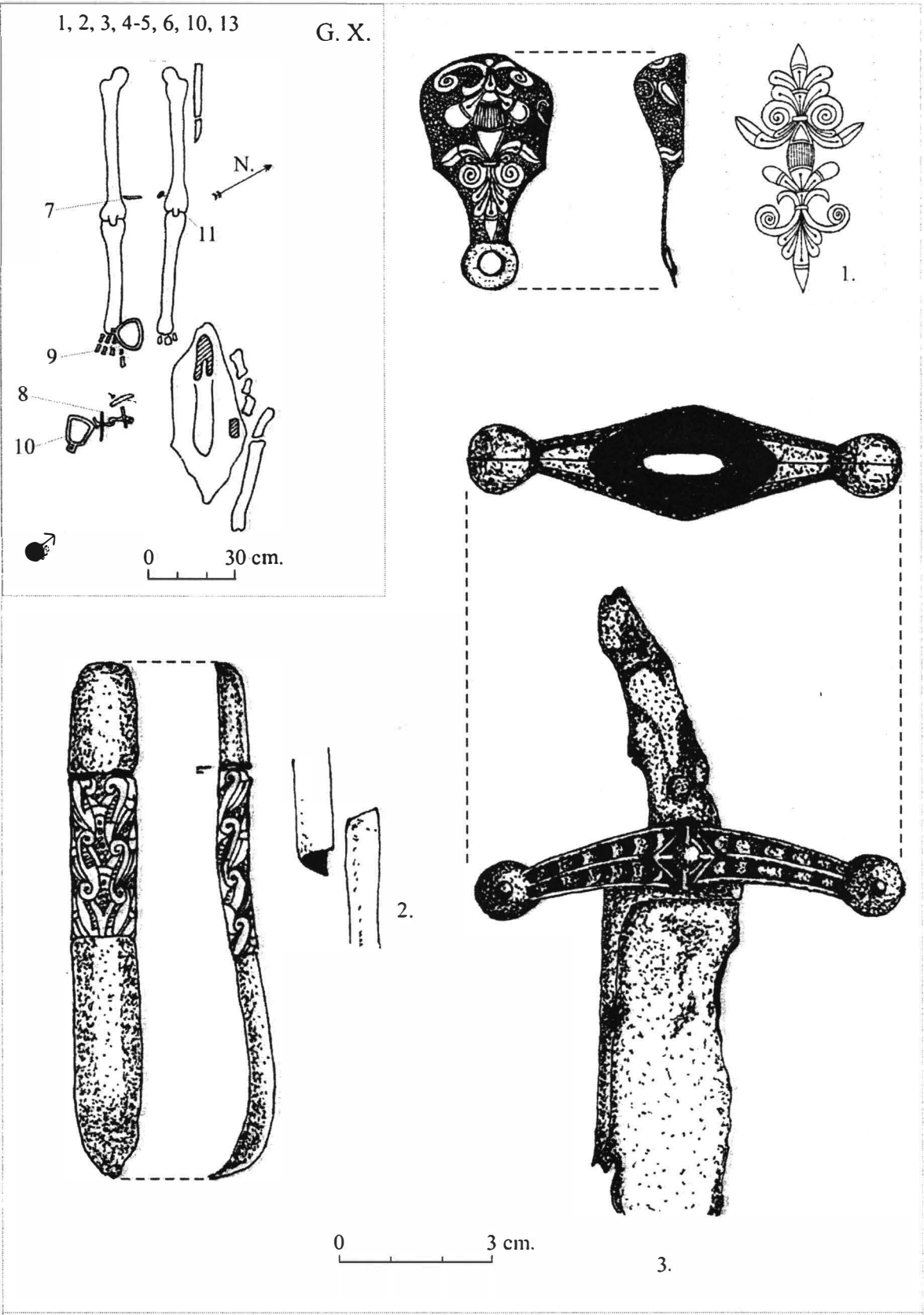
The same holds for horse burials (four of the five types in the system of Cs. Bálint are known from these regions), food-drink-egg burials as well as for obolus burials. These customs are clear links between other regions of the Carpathian basin and Transylvania, Crișana and Banat. It should be noted, however, that regional differences are documented mostly in the region of the Lower Mureș, on both sides of the river (see map 7). To date no female horse burials have been found in Transylvania, whereas in Crișana and Banat this type is securely documented. In our opinion, this fact is very informative as regards the economic status of the Transylvanian communities. Based on available data it can be stated that horse burials were mainly characteristic of male burials. There is no clear difference as regards the obolus burials in the three regions. The earliest obolus find is dated to the early 11th century; whereas in Banat a Romanos II coin, from the first half of the 10th century, was discovered from a grave with N-S orientation; in Crișana coins, which are probably western dinars, were found mainly in horse burials. There is no archaeological evidence of these customs from the 9th century in the Transylvania, Crișana and Banat.

Some of the cemeteries have no links with steppe culture and are different from other cemeteries in the Carpathian basin in the 10th–11th centuries. The burial customs in these cemeteries, recovered in Alba Iulia, which was to become the centre of Transylvania later on, also differ from those in the same region and from those found in the regions of Banat–Crișana. The cemeteries at Brândușei Street, Izvorul Împăratului and Stația de Salvare are characterised by features that are to be found in cemeteries with horse-weapon burials (the cemetery at Stația de Salvare did contain horse burials, but these do not have limestone/brick covering and/or other orientations than W-E). The great proportion of graves with limestone/brick covering and frame and E-W, N-S, and S-N orientations suggests that these customs are not to be considered Hungarian. The phenomenon, best described by the term “multicultural”, was characteristic of 10th century Transylvania. Contrary to Transylvania, the other regions are culturally more homogeneous. In my opinion, the N-S orientated graves at Uivar and those of diverse orientation at Moftinu Mic are to be associated with another population (as opposed to those discovered at Sălcea and Zalău, on the ground that artefact finds of these sites are not ethno-specific). Cemeteries with similar rituals were not found elsewhere in this region or in the Carpathian basin. The population characterised by cemeteries of diverse orientations, graves with limestone covering and lacking horse-weapon burials may well have come from somewhere else than the Hungarians. There has been no definitive solution to this problem; the state of research does not allow any more precise conclusions to be drawn.

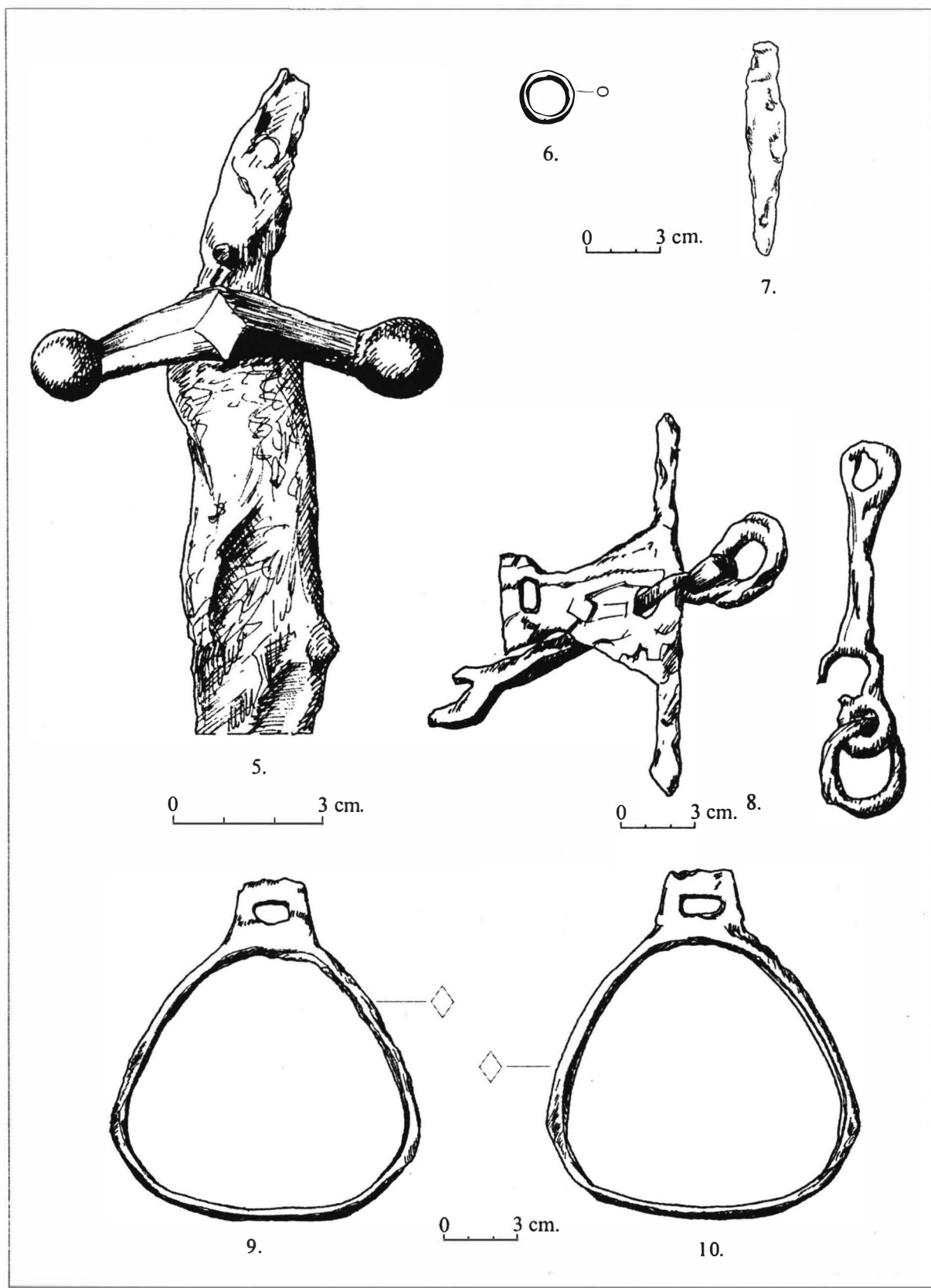
The closest graves with limestone/stone covering are those the Lower Danube region. In these cemeteries both cremation and inhumation burials occur, graves with limestone/brick covering are in large numbers, iar the graves have diverse orientations. Inhumation burials considered to be Slavic in Transylvania, dating from the 7th–9th centuries, show the same orientation diversity. The population using the cemeteries of Alba Iulia, dated to the 10th century, practised different burial customs: they buried their dead with diverse orientations and placed limestone/brick covering on/in the graves. In my opinion, either the population of the Lower Danube region used the cemeteries of Alba Iulia, or these cemeteries were used by the local population, in transitional period from cremation to inhumation burials.

In the 11th century the orientation became less diverse, the most common being W-E, and graves with stone/brick frame are more and more common. In the 11th century, E-W, S-N and N-S orientation is unknown, as well as horse burials and animal bones in the graves. From this century onwards, graves were less richly furnished, conforming to strict Christian norms.

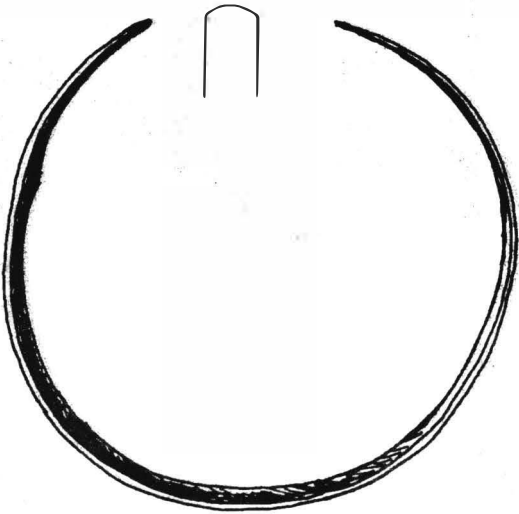
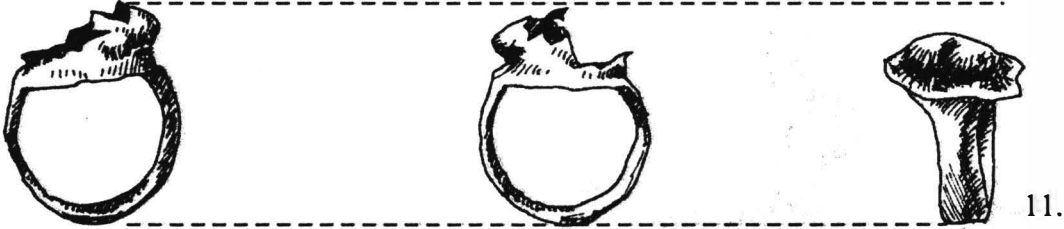
<sup>446</sup> Tettamanti, 1975, 103.



Pl. 1. Arad-Ceala, grave X: 1 gilded bronz sabrefitt; 2 lobe bronz plaque; 3 sabre.



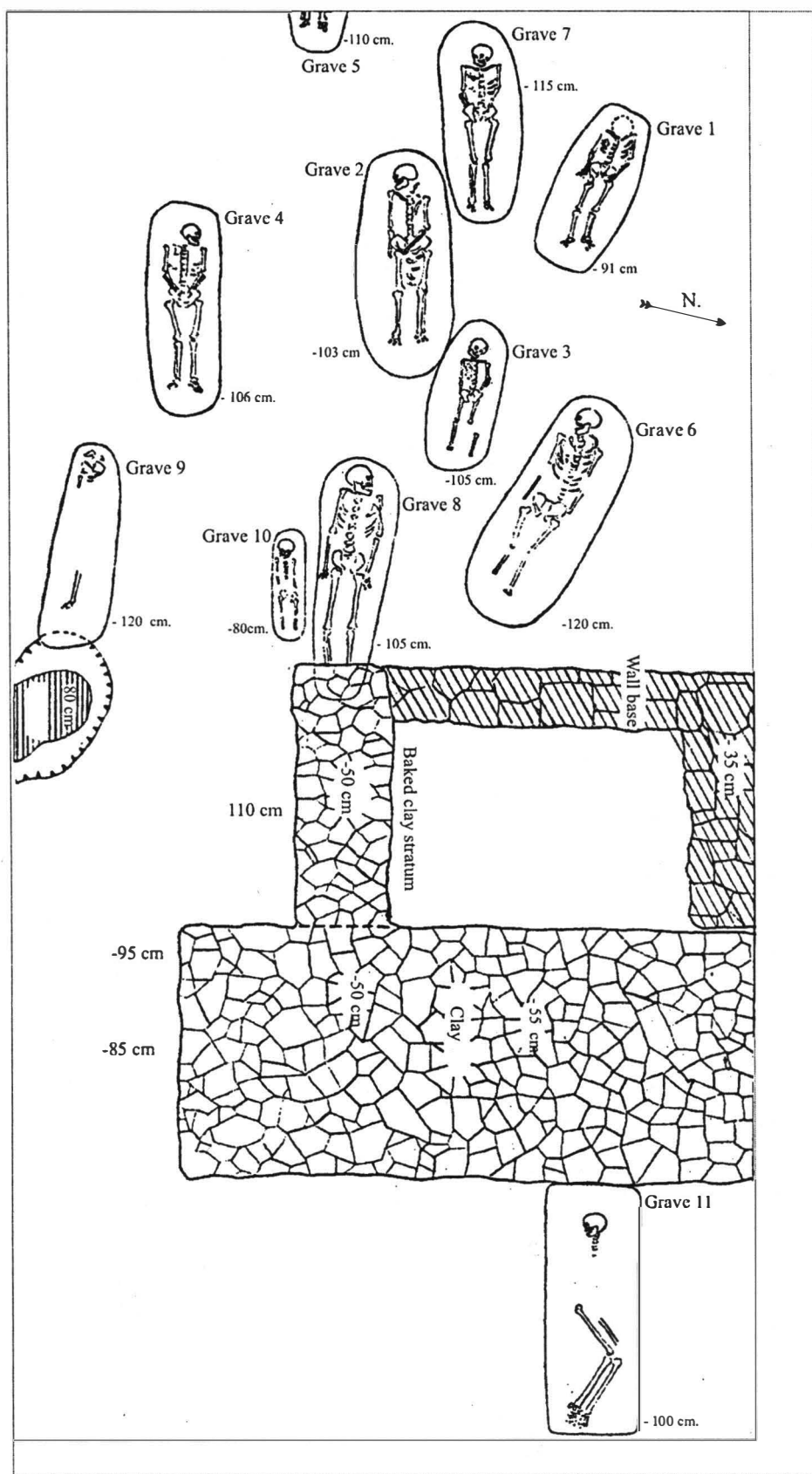
Pl. 2. Arad-Ceala, graveX: 5 sabre; 6 quiverring; 7 knife; 8 bit; 9-10 stirrups.



12.

0 3 cm.

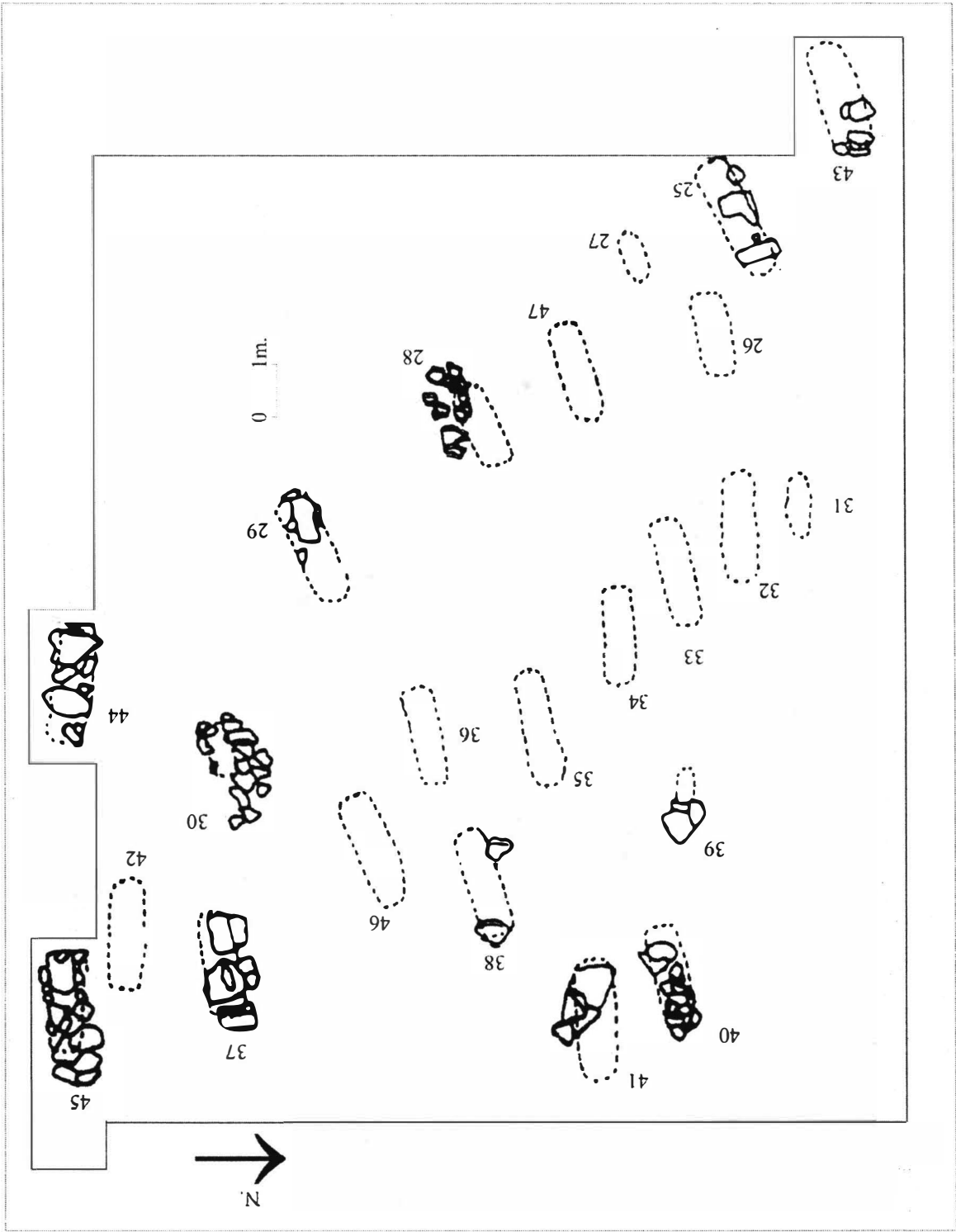
Pl. 3. Arad-Ceala, graveX: 11 finger ring; 12 bracelet.



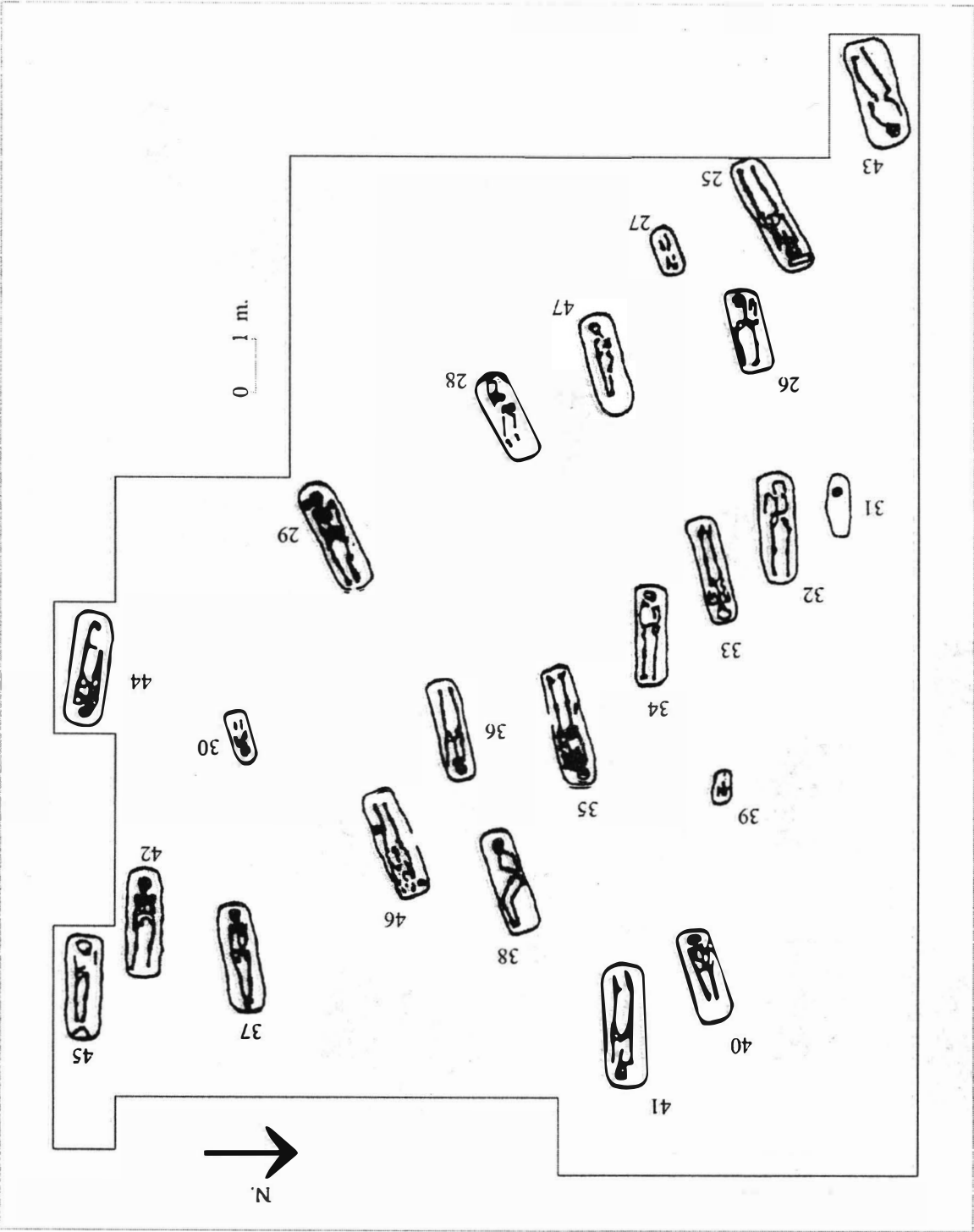
Pl. 4. Biharea – middle of the fortress.



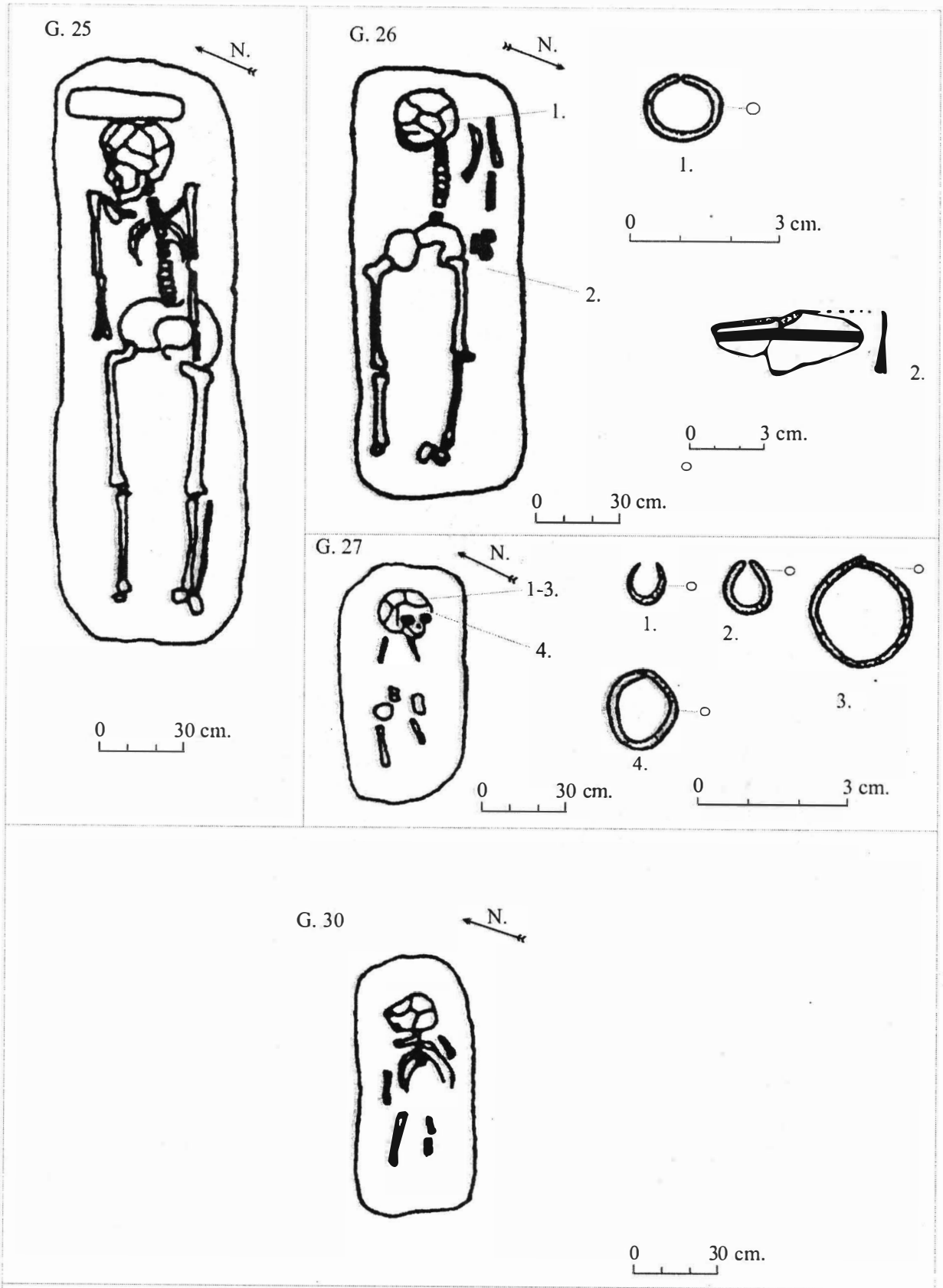
Pl. 5. The cemeteries of Alba Iulia: 1-4 Stația de salvare; 5 Vânătorilor street; 6 Bishop catedral; 7 SW part of the fortress; 8 Brândușei street; 9 Izvorul Împăratului; 10 Băile Romane.



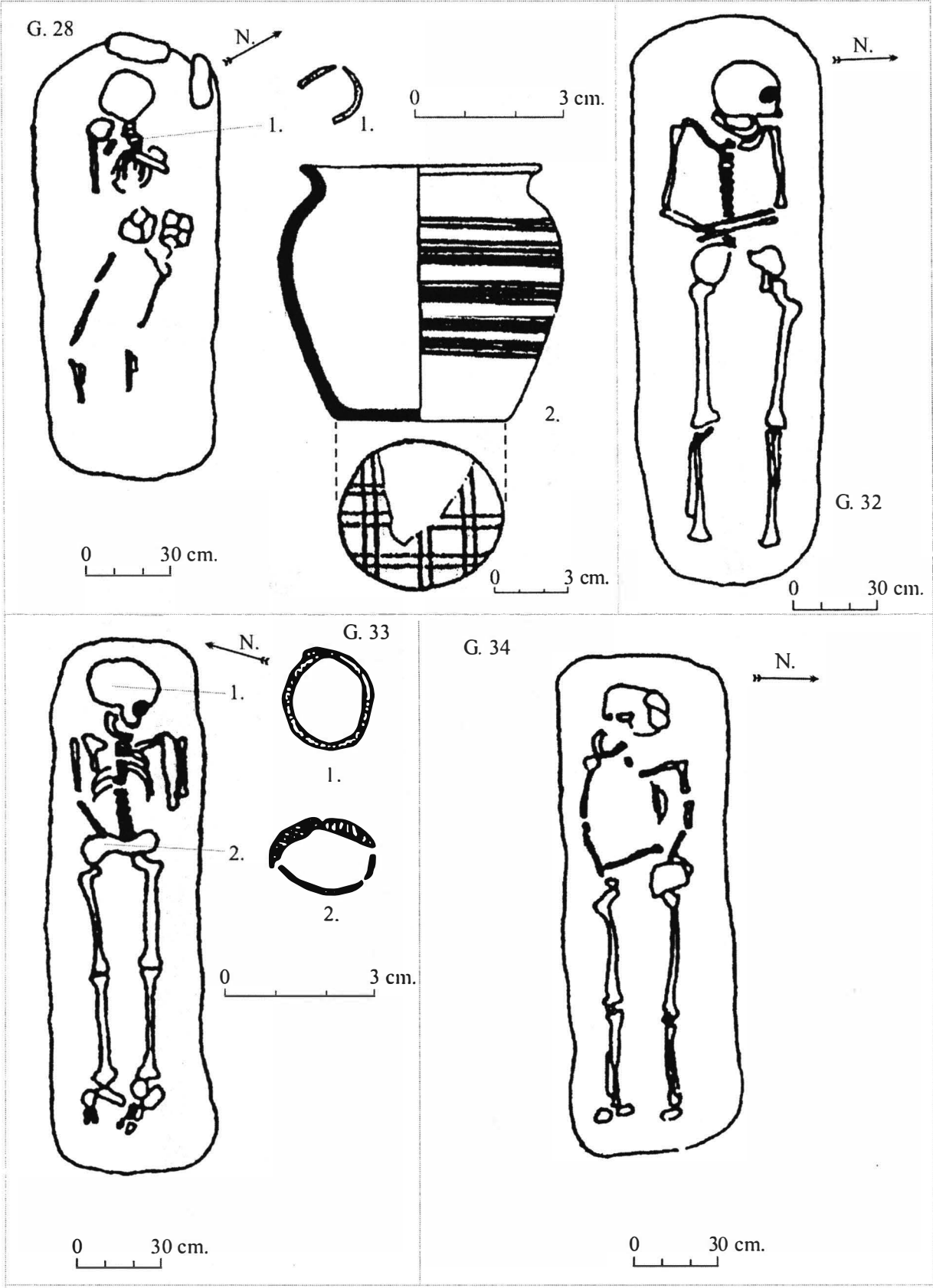
Pl. 6. Alba Iulia-Brânduşei street, graves with stone coverings excavated in 1999.



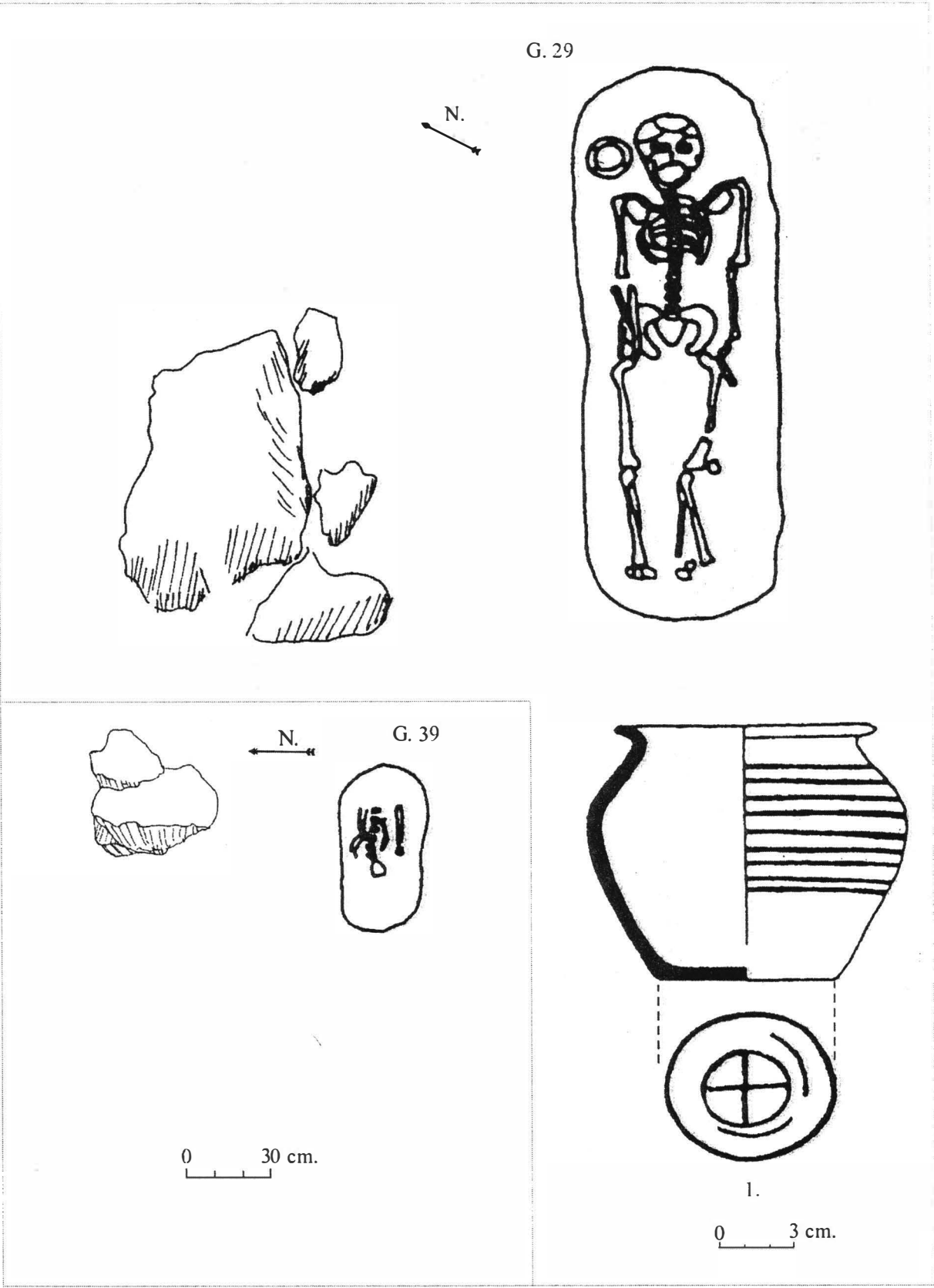
Pl. 7. Alba Iulia-Brândușei street, map of a part of the cemetery excavated in 1999.



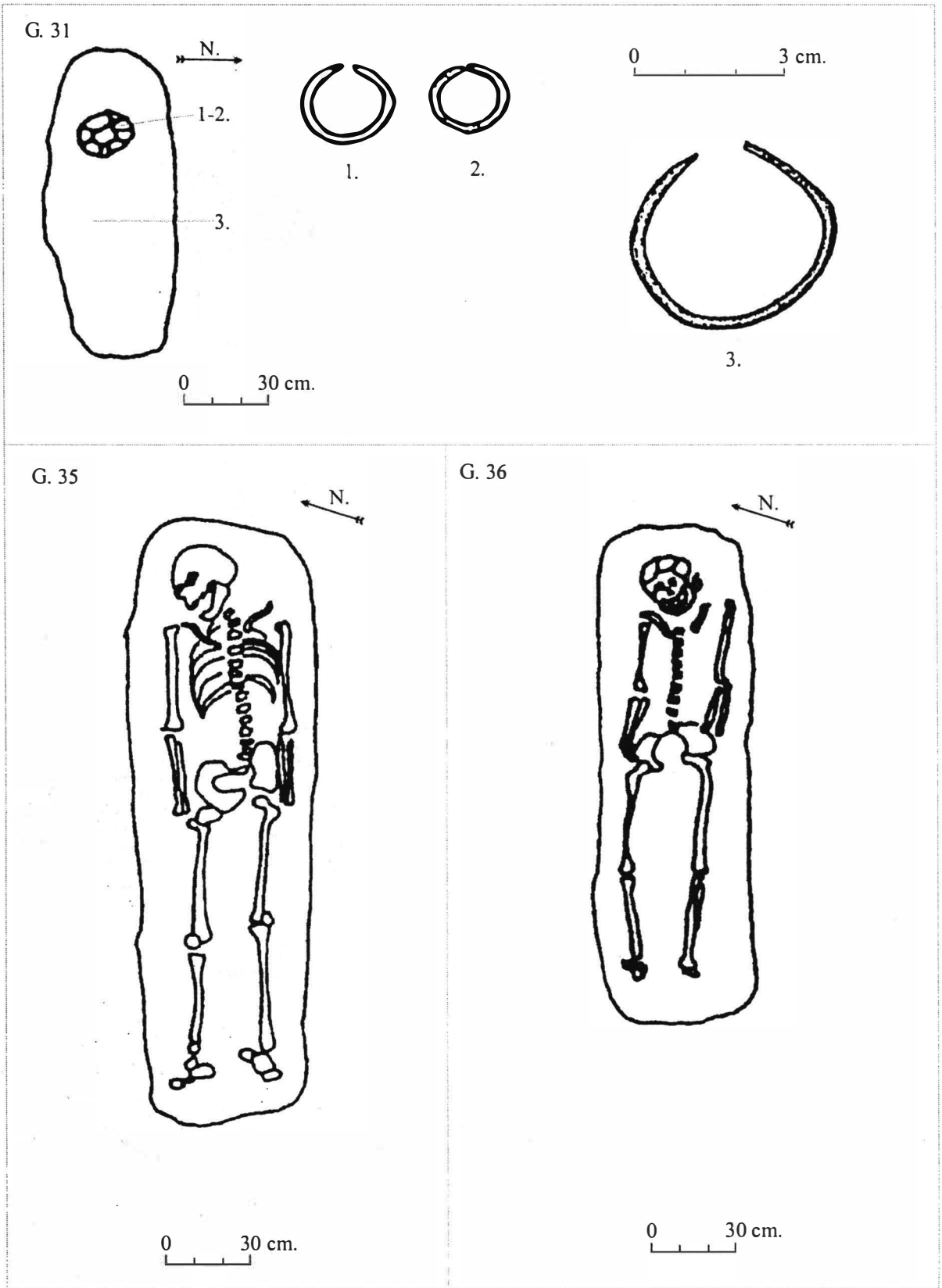
Pl. 8. Alba Iulia–Brândușei street, grave 25; grave 26: 1 hair ring; 2 pottery; grave 27: 1-4 hair rings.



Pl. 9. Alba Iulia-Brândușei street, grave 28: 1 hair ring; 2 pottery; grave 32; grave 33: 1 hair ring; 2 finger ring; grave 34.

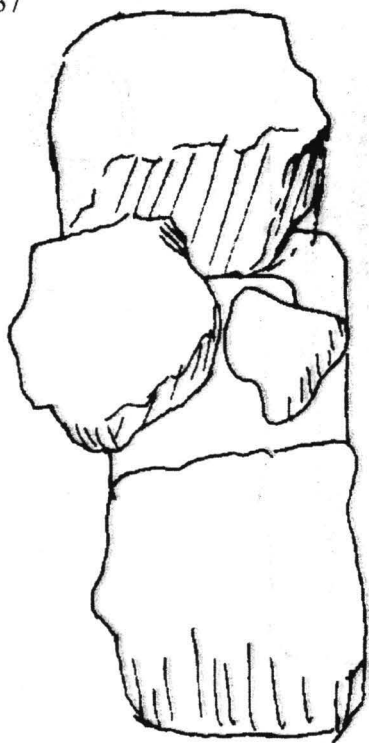


Pl. 10. Alba Iulia–Brândușei street, grave 29: 1 pottery; grave 39.



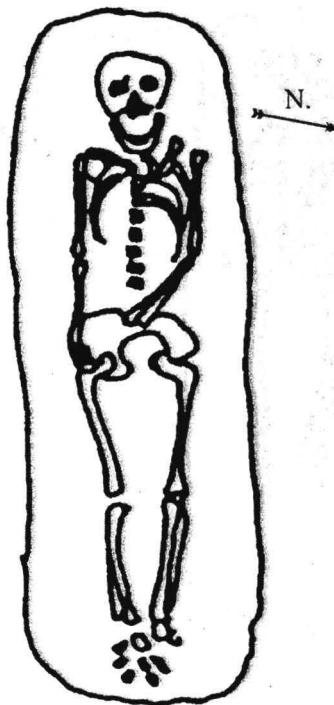
Pl. 11. Alba Iulia-Brândușei street, grave 31: 1-2 hair rings; 2 bracelet; graves 35-36.

G. 37

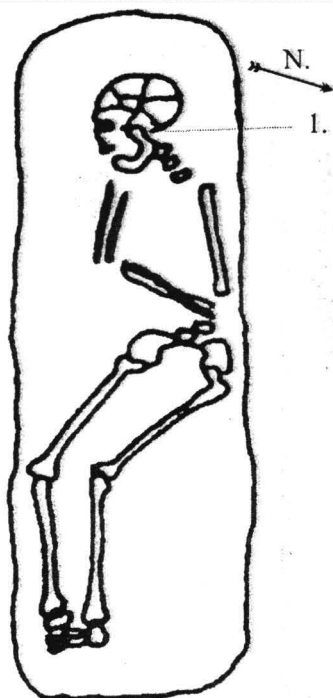


Grave 37

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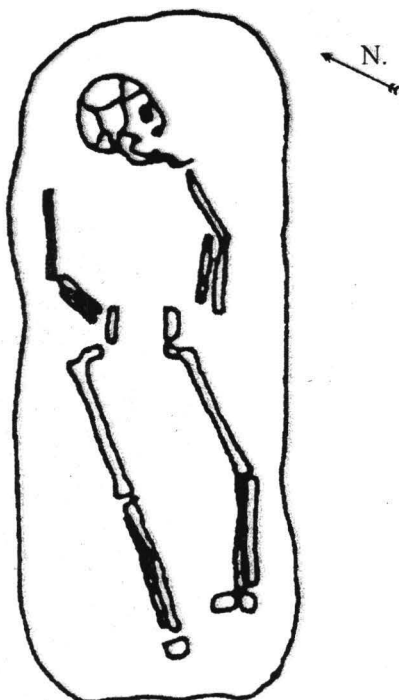
G. 38



0 30 cm.

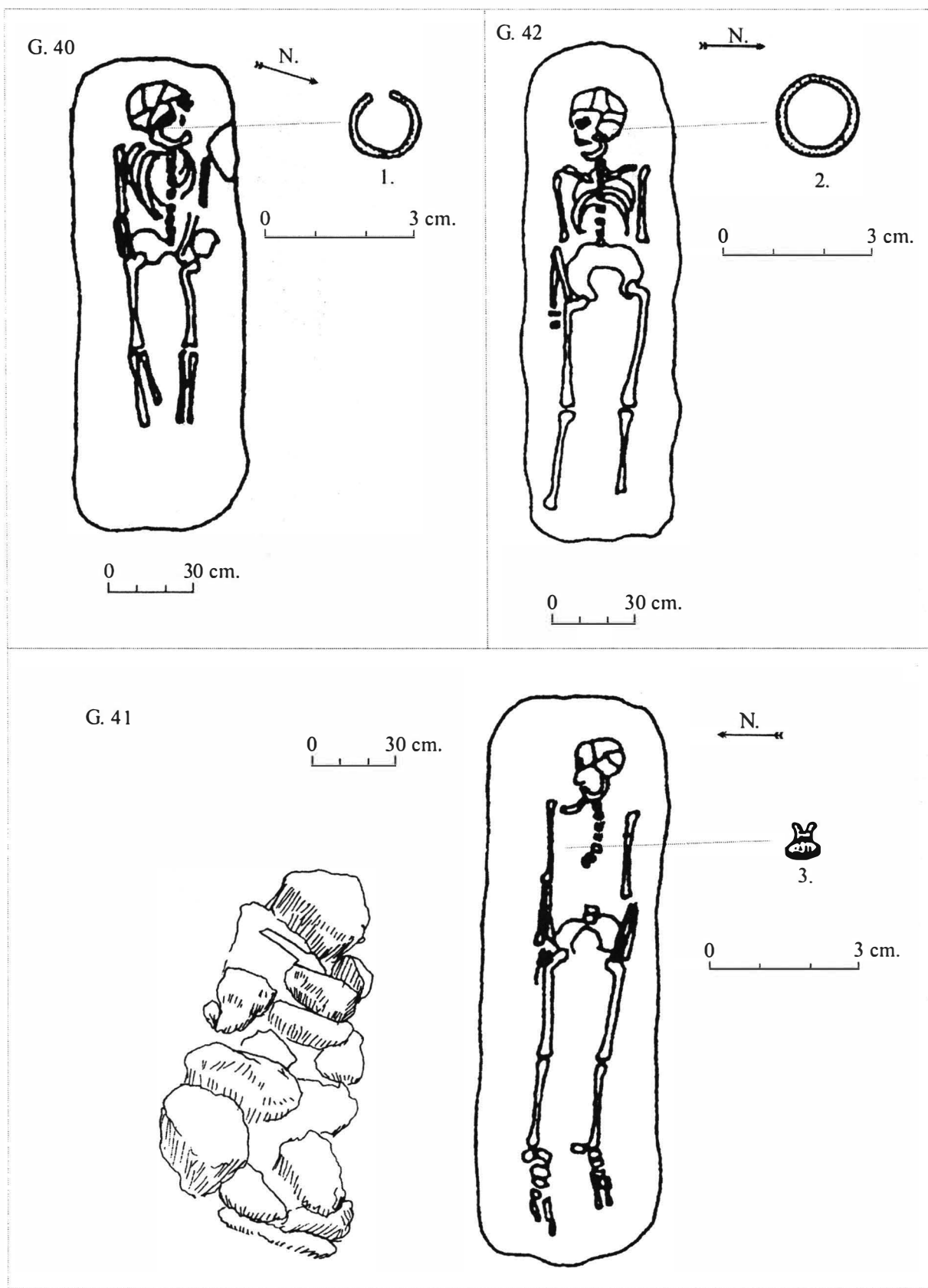


G. 43

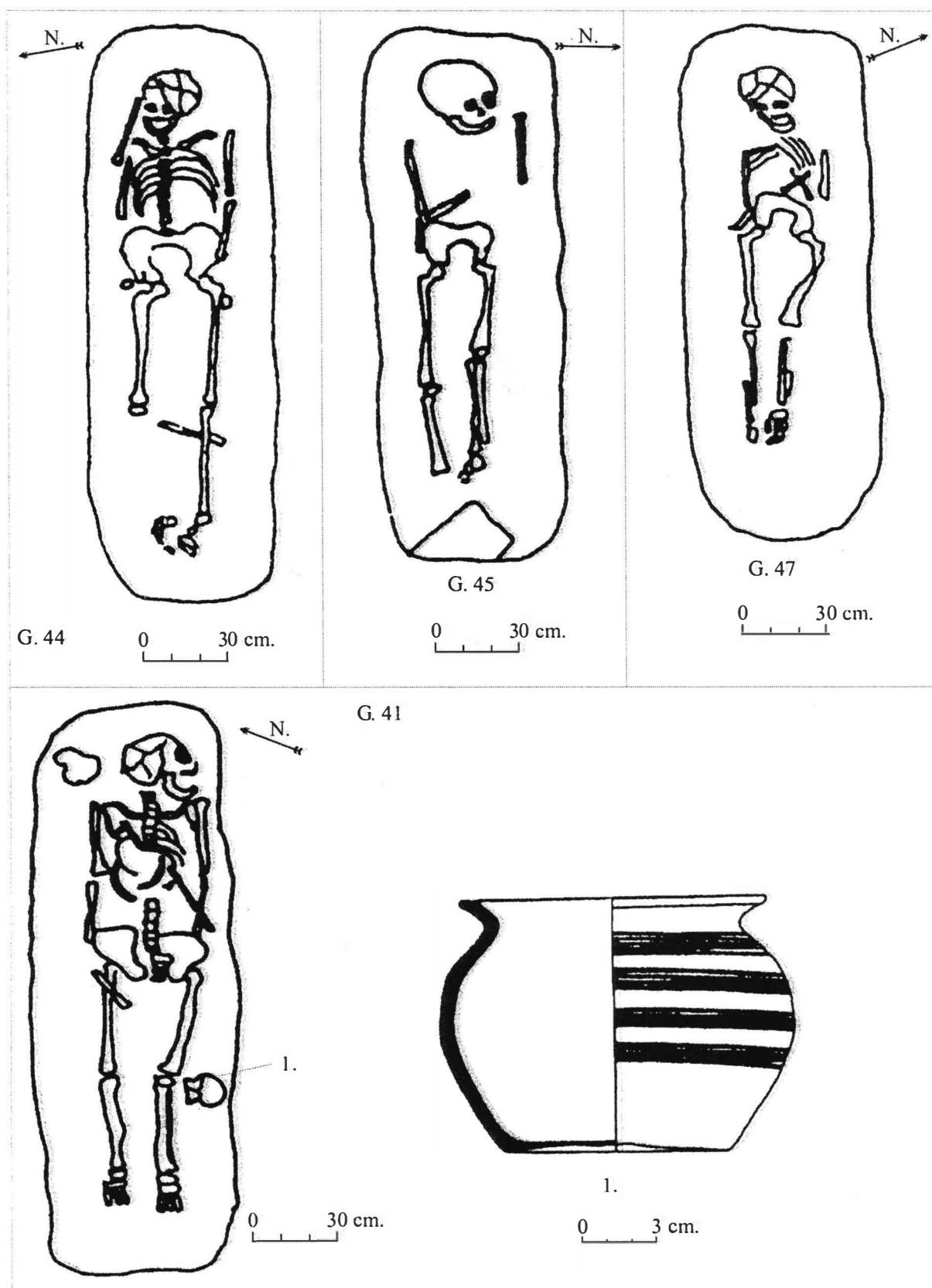


0 30 cm.

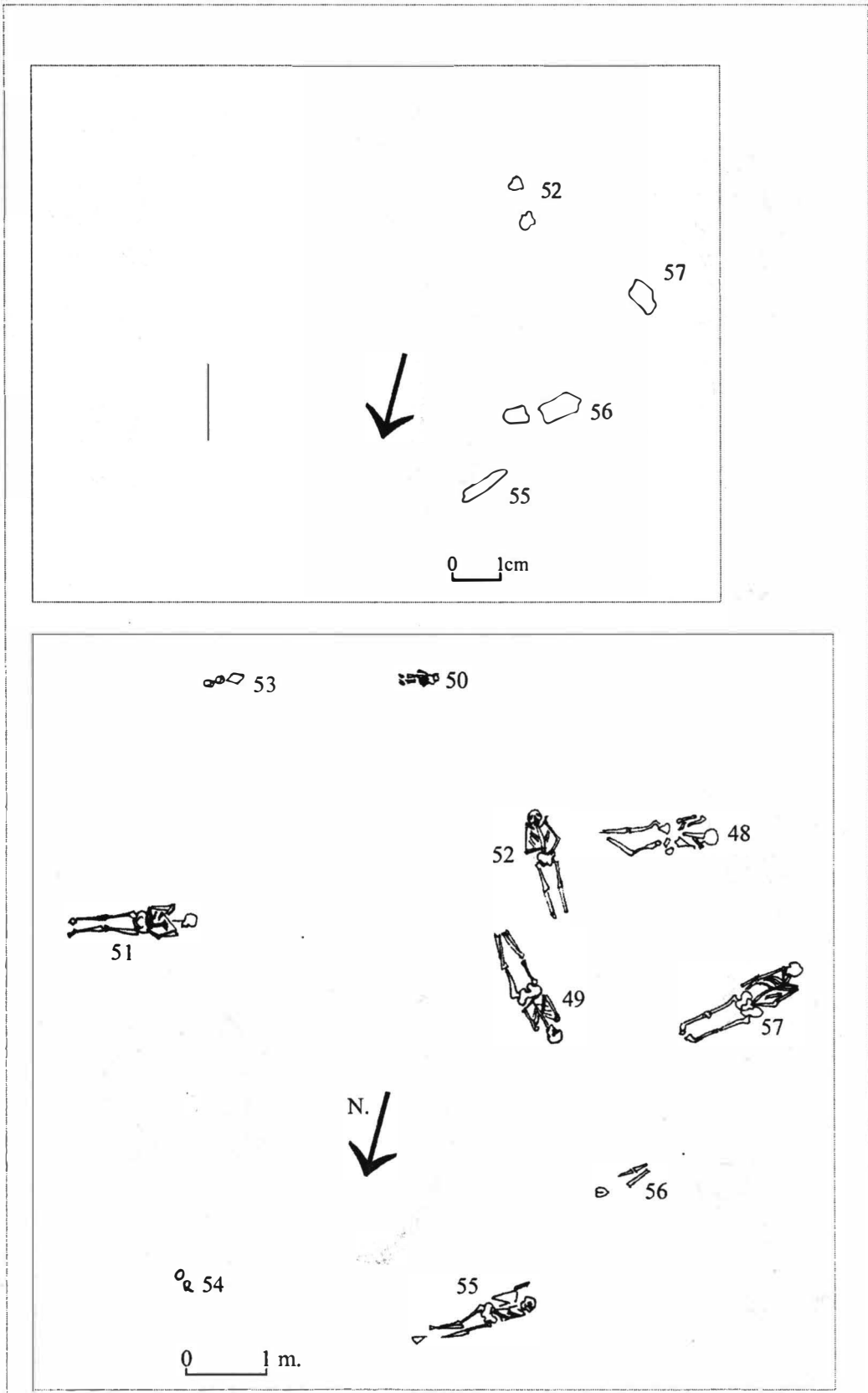
Pl. 12. Alba Iulia–Brăndușei street, grave 37; grave 38: I hair ring; grave 43.



Pl. 13. Alba Iulia-Brândușei street, grave 40: 1 hair ring; grave 41: 1 buton; grave 42: 1 hair ring.



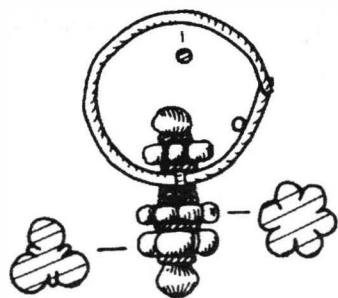
Pl. 14. Alba Iulia–Brândușei street, grave 41: 1 pottery; graves 44, 45, 47.



Pl. 15. Alba Iulia–Brândușei street – the part of the cemetery excavated in 2001.



Pl. 16. Cluj–Zăpolya street cemetery, surroundings and topography at the beginning of the 20th century.

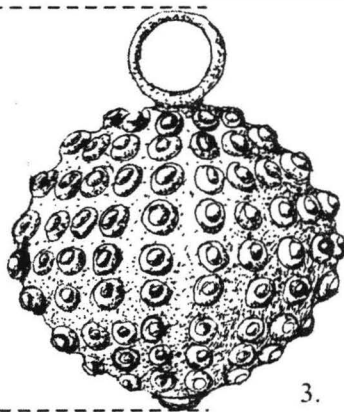
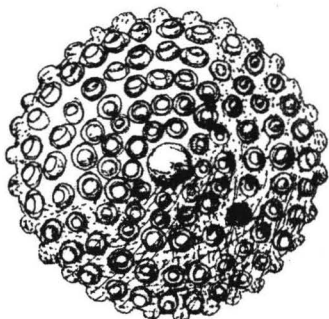


1

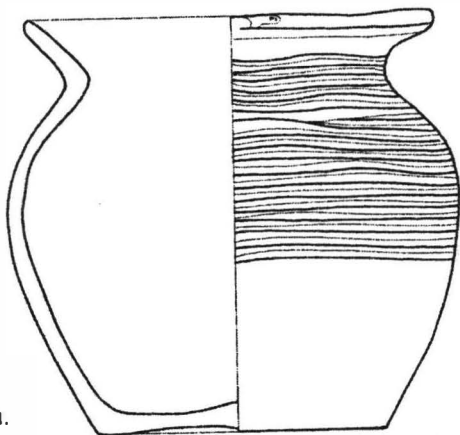
0 3 cm.



2.



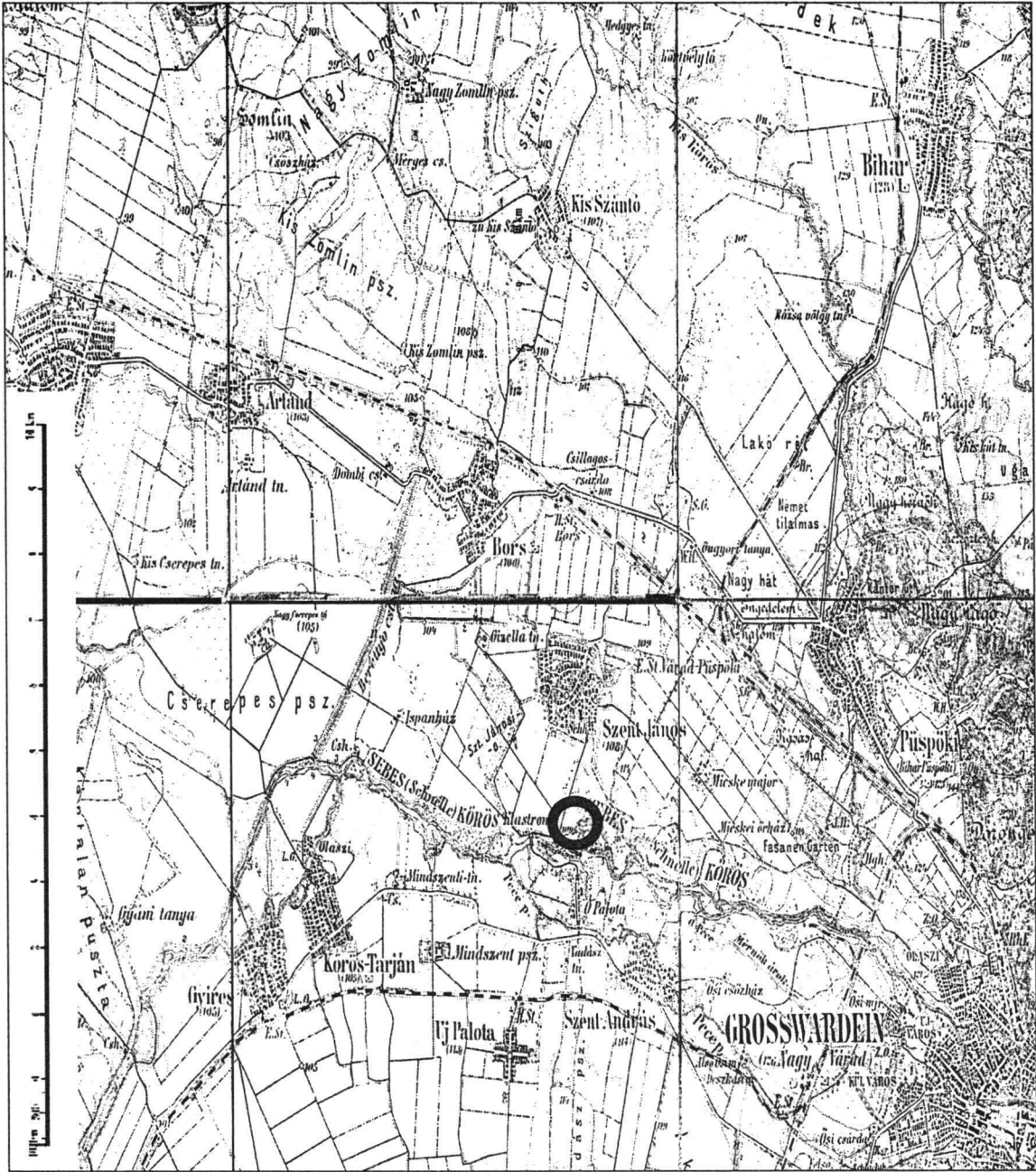
3.



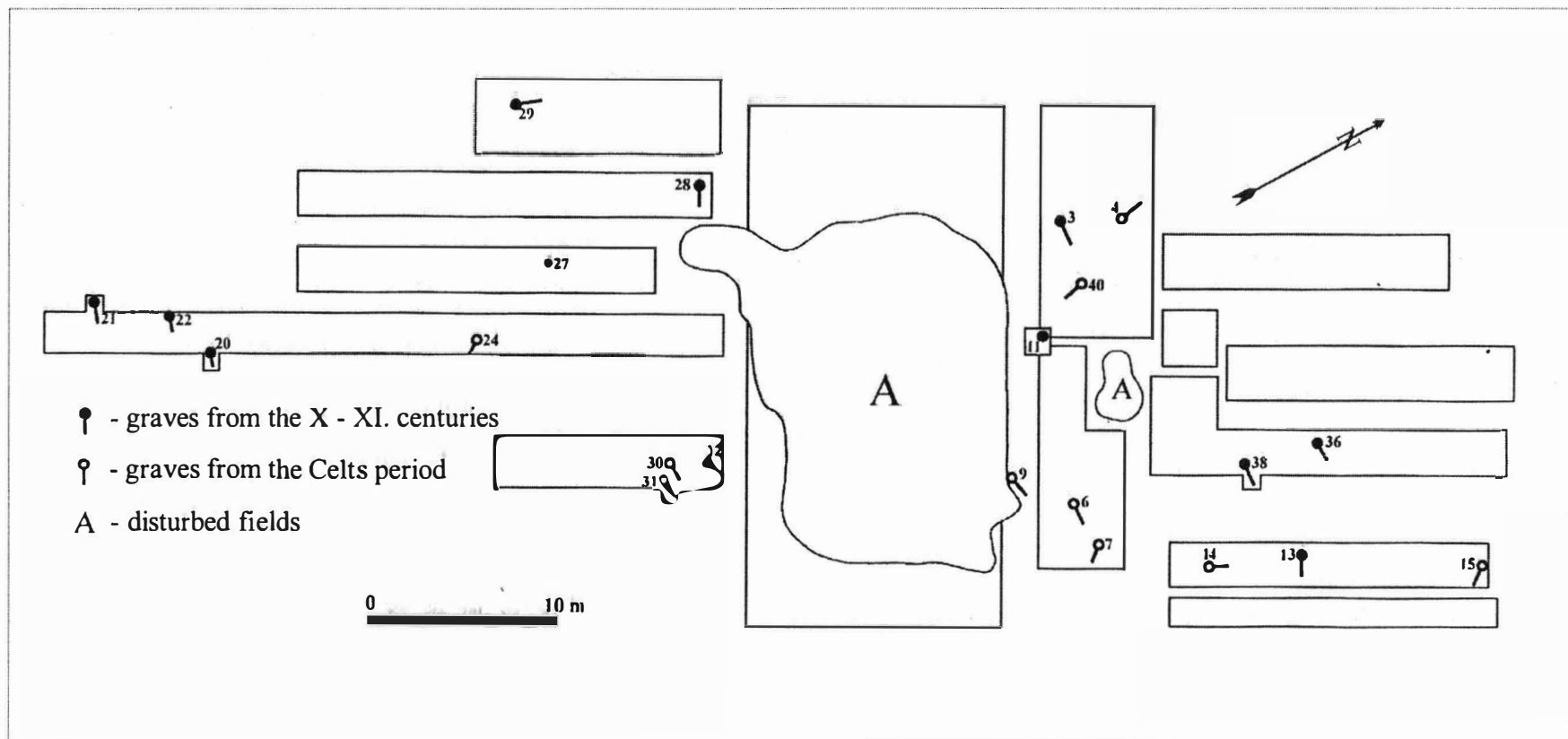
0 3 cm.

4

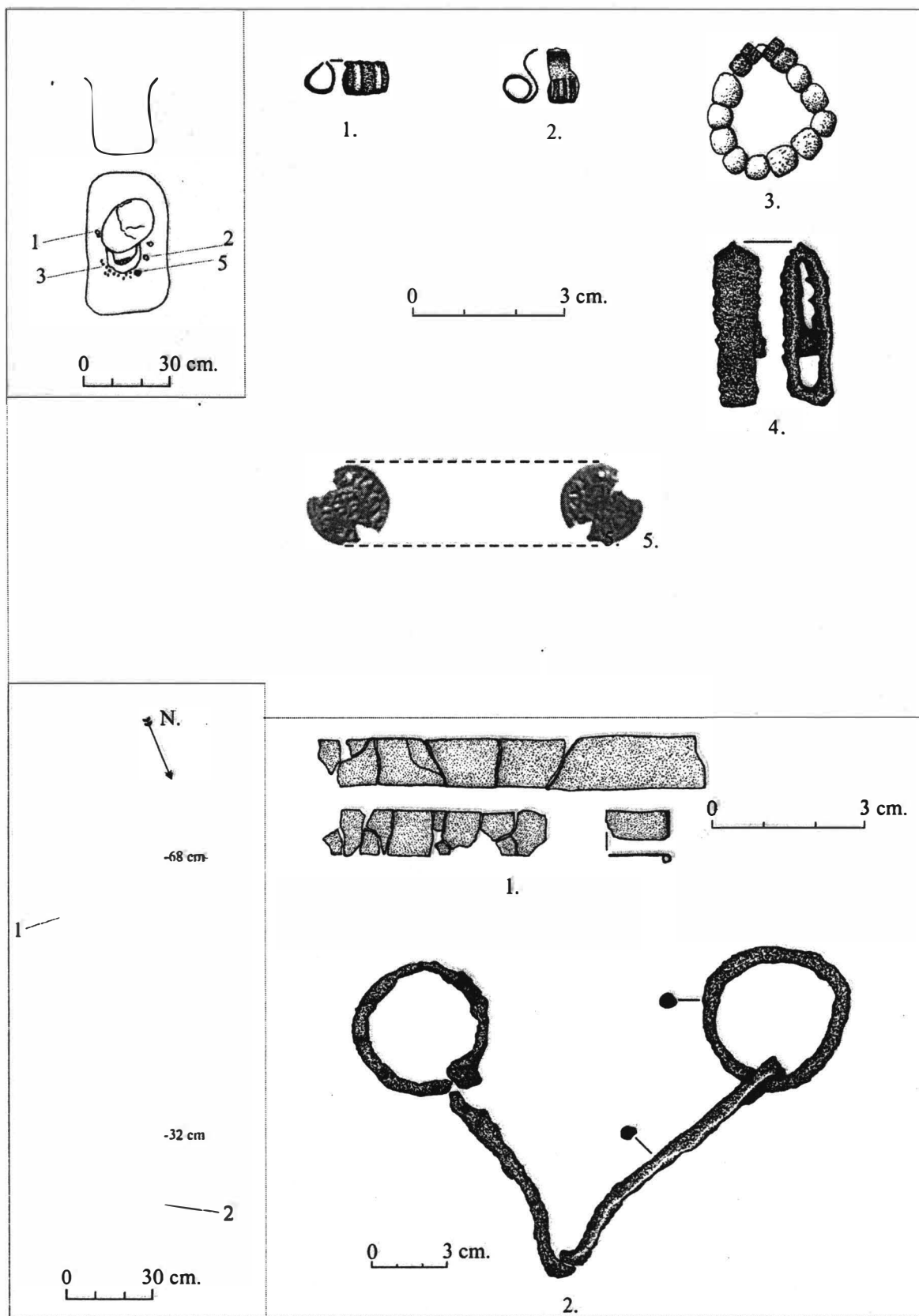
Pl. 17. Cluj-Zápolya street, grave 5.



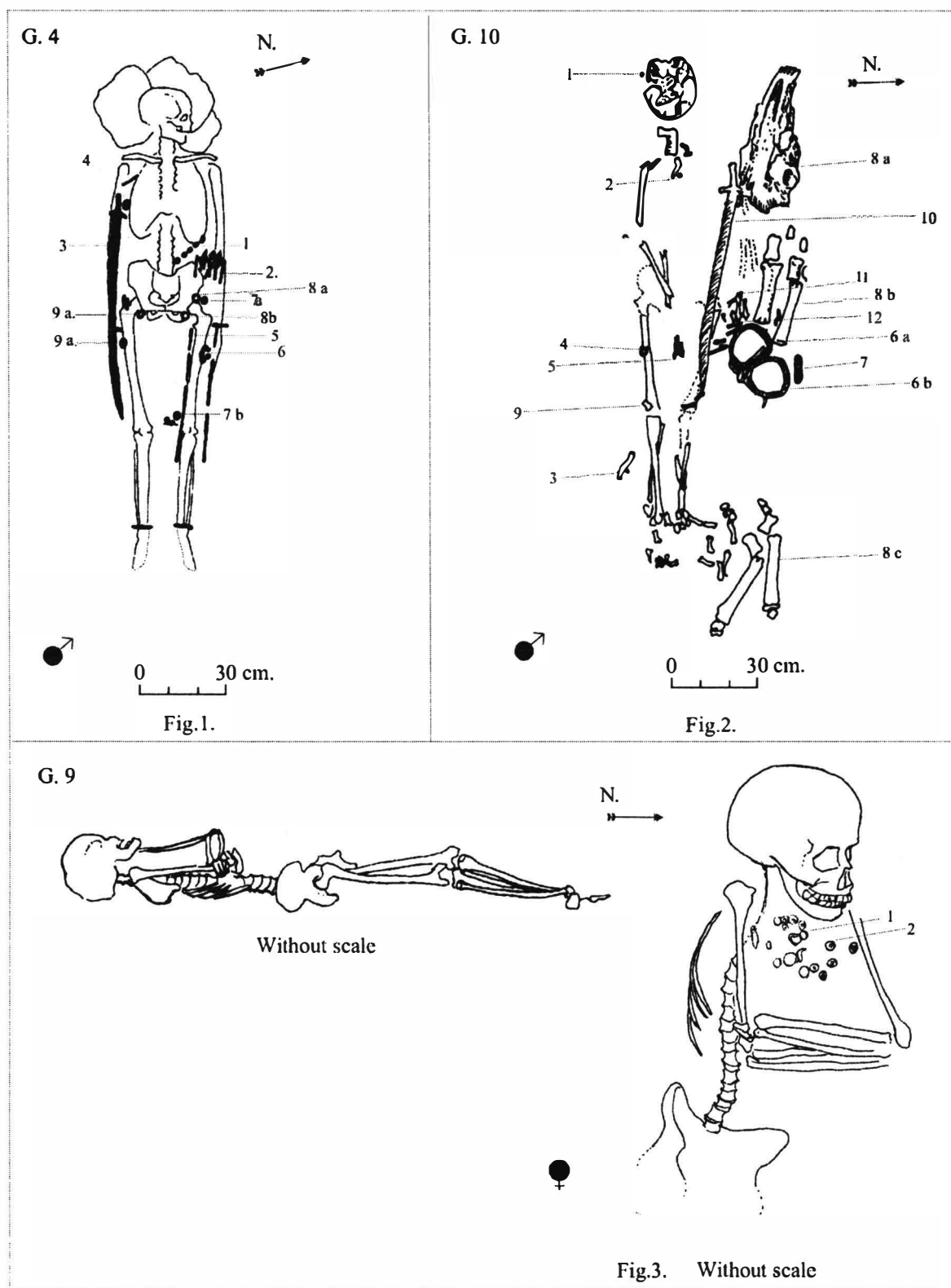
Pl. 18. Tărian-geographical setting of the site.



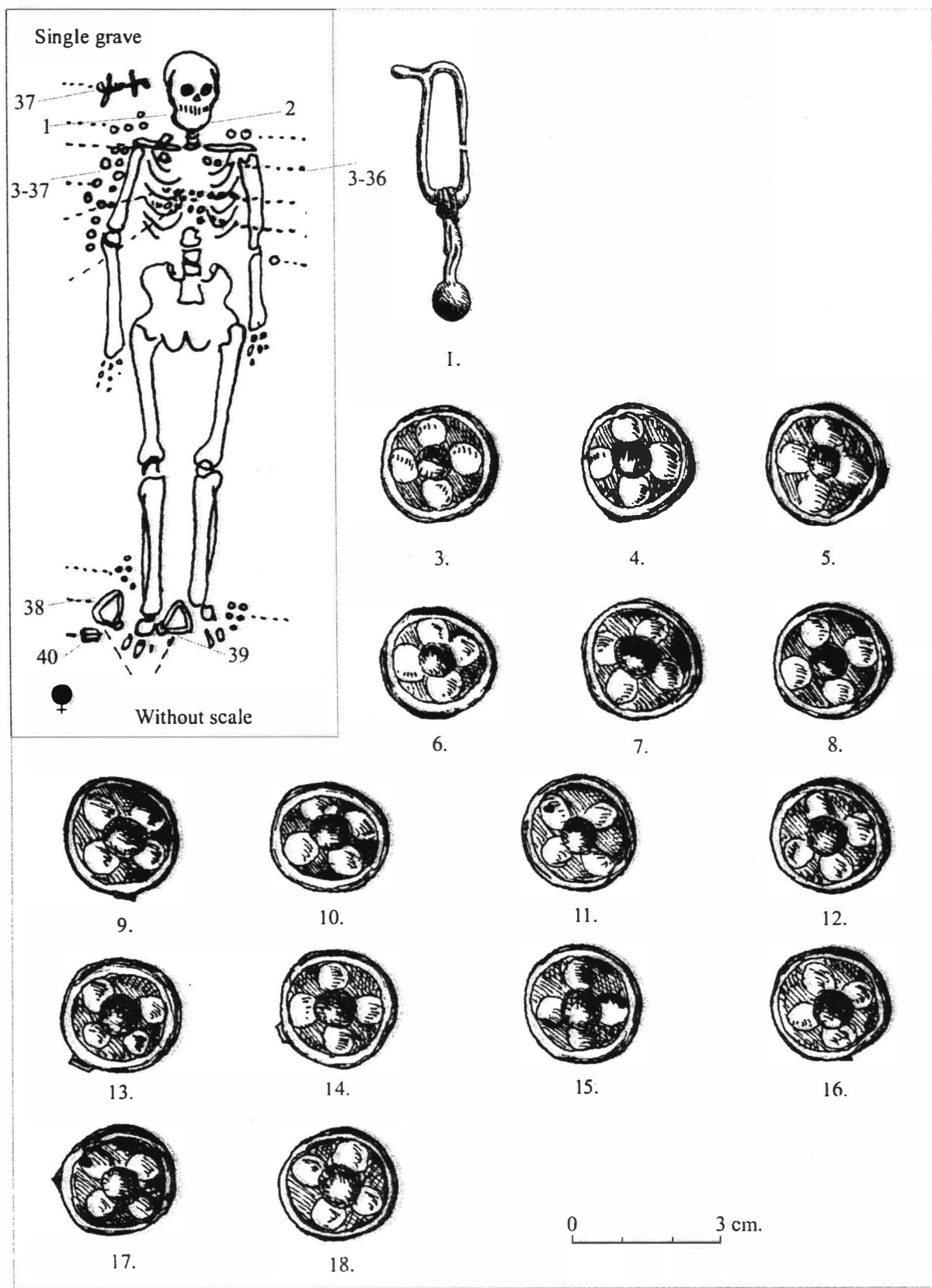
Pl. 19. Tărian—map of the cemetery.



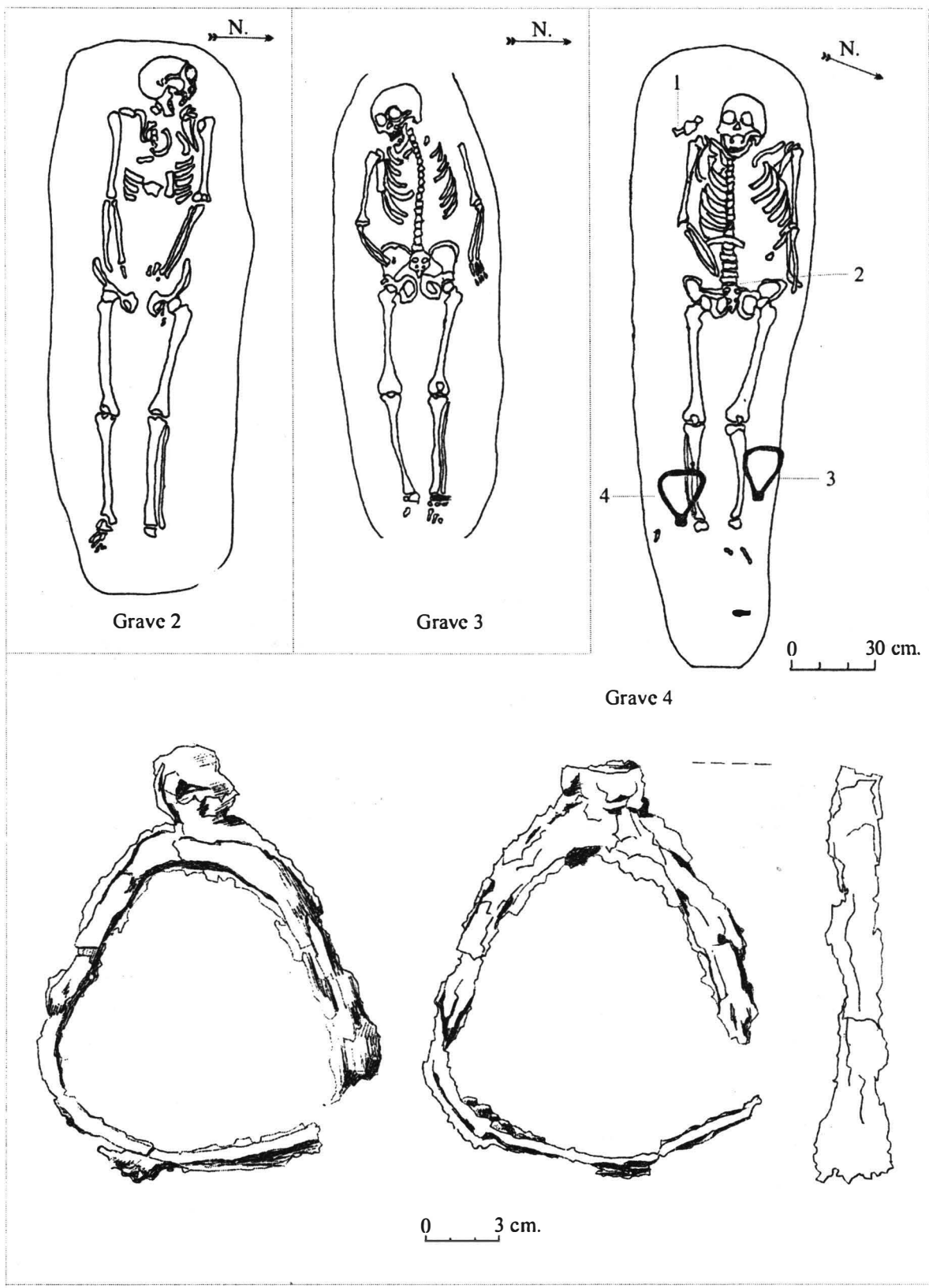
Pl. 20. Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaş, grave 11: 1-2 hair rings; 3 bead necklace; 4 piece with unknown function; 5 coin; grave 29: 1 bracelet fragment; 2 bit.



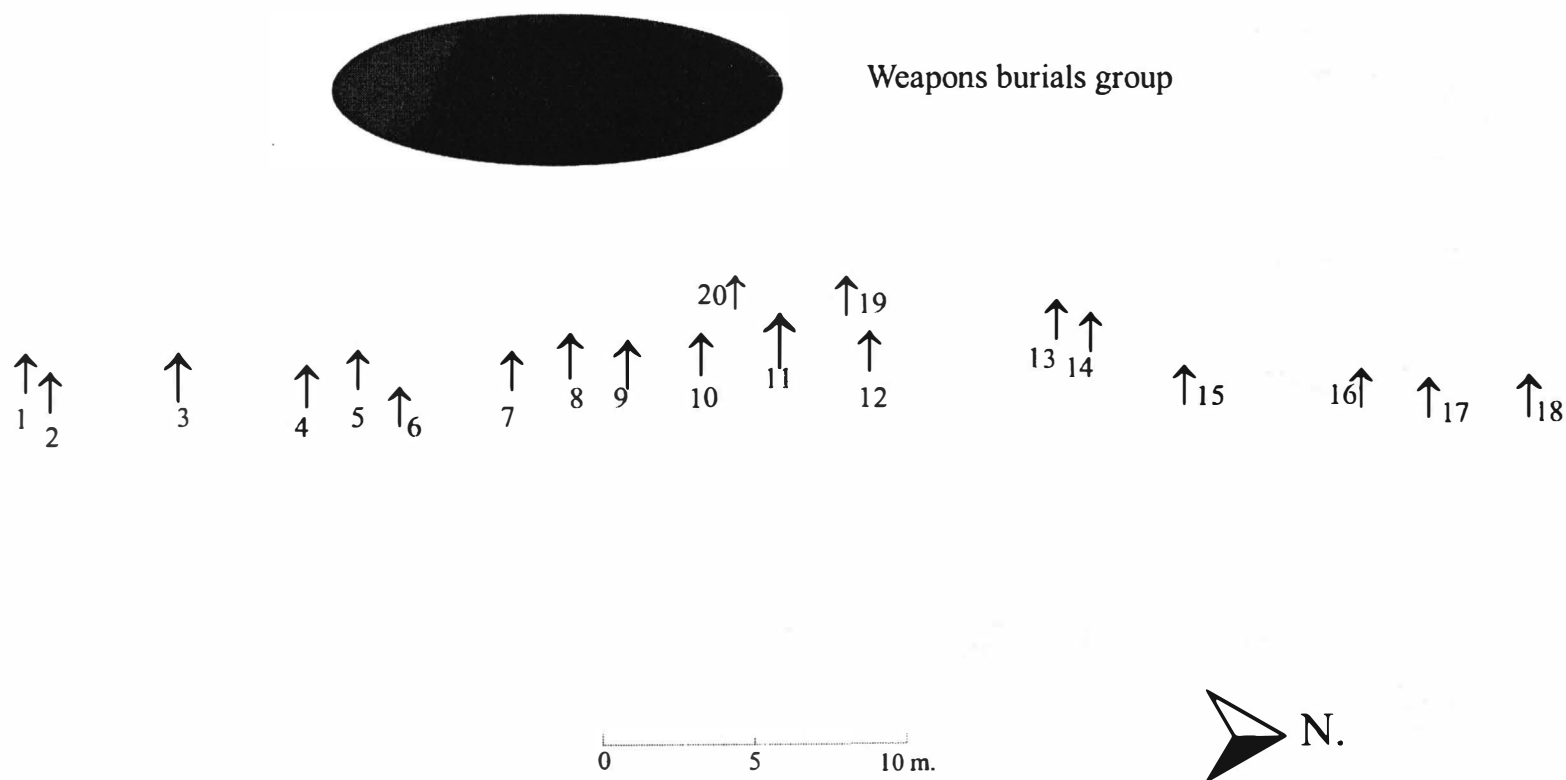
Pl. 21: Cluj-Zappollya, grave 4: 1 buttons; 2 arrowheads; 3 saber; 4 saber buckle; 5-6 quiver; 7 a-b quiver buckles; 8 a-b quiver rings; 9 a-b saber rings; Cluj-Zappollya, grave 10: 1-3 appliques; 4 rings; 5 quiver/tache hanging; 6 a-b stirrups; 7 bit; 8 horse head and bones; 9 buckle; 10 saber; 11 arrowheads; 12 quiver.



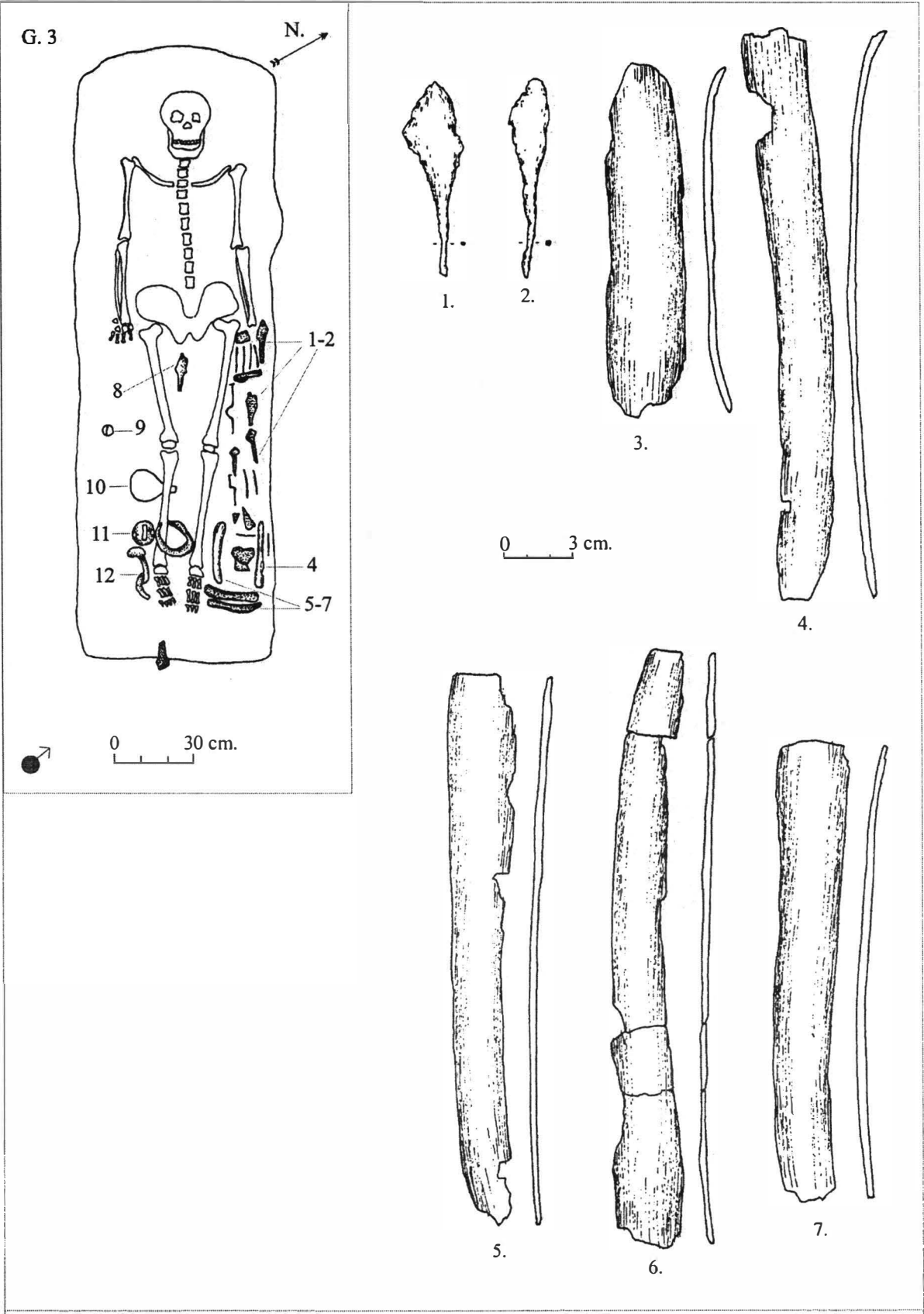
Pl. 22. Sânpetru German–Field of G.A.S.: 1–2 earrings; 3–36 harness rosettes; 37 bit; 38–39 stirrups; 40 strap buckle.



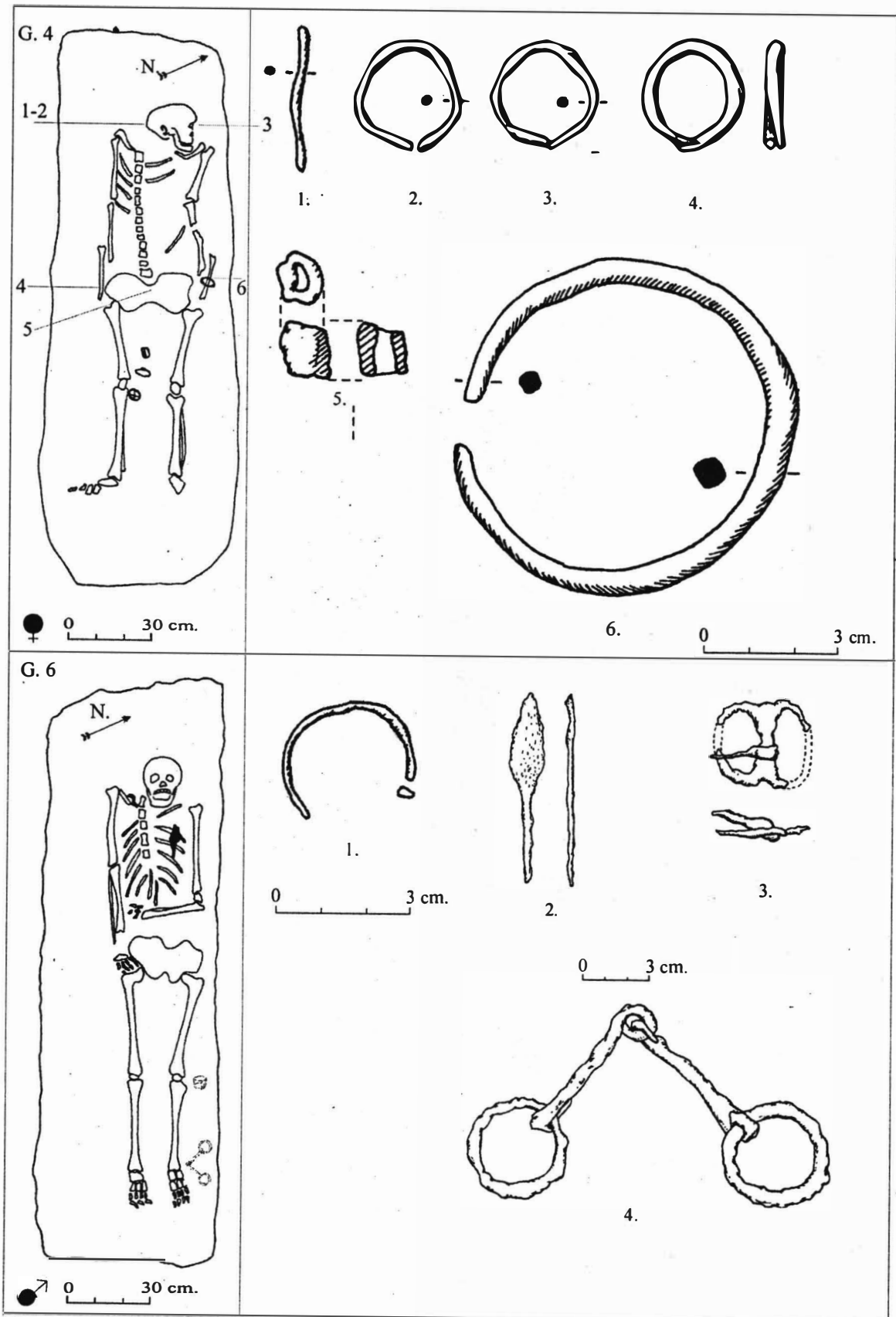
Pl. 23. Dudeștii Vechi–Movila lui Dragomir, grave 2, grave 3, grave 4: 1 animal bones; 2 quiver fragment; 3–4 stirrups.



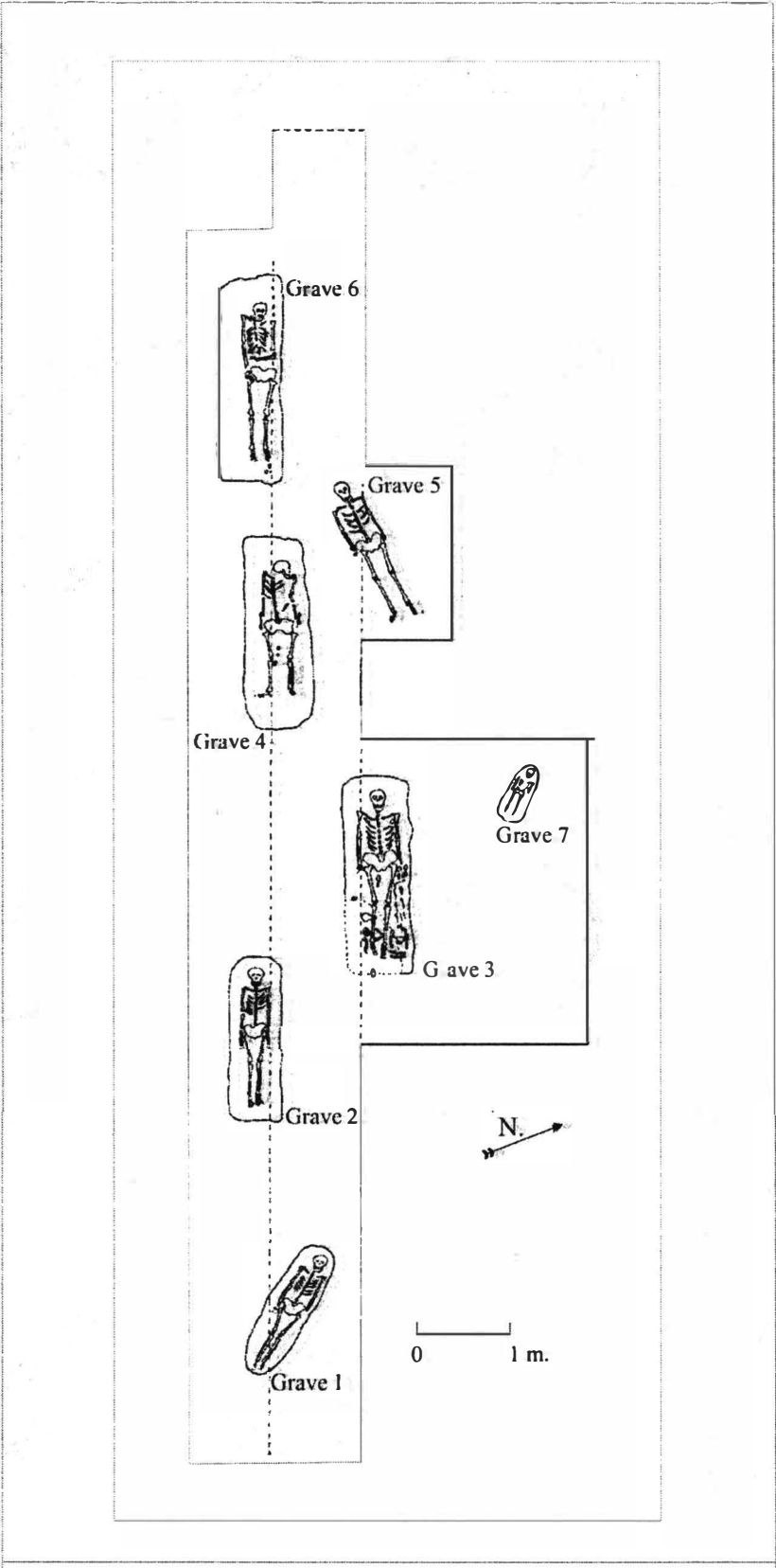
Pl. 24. Timișoara–Cioreni, a reconstructed map.



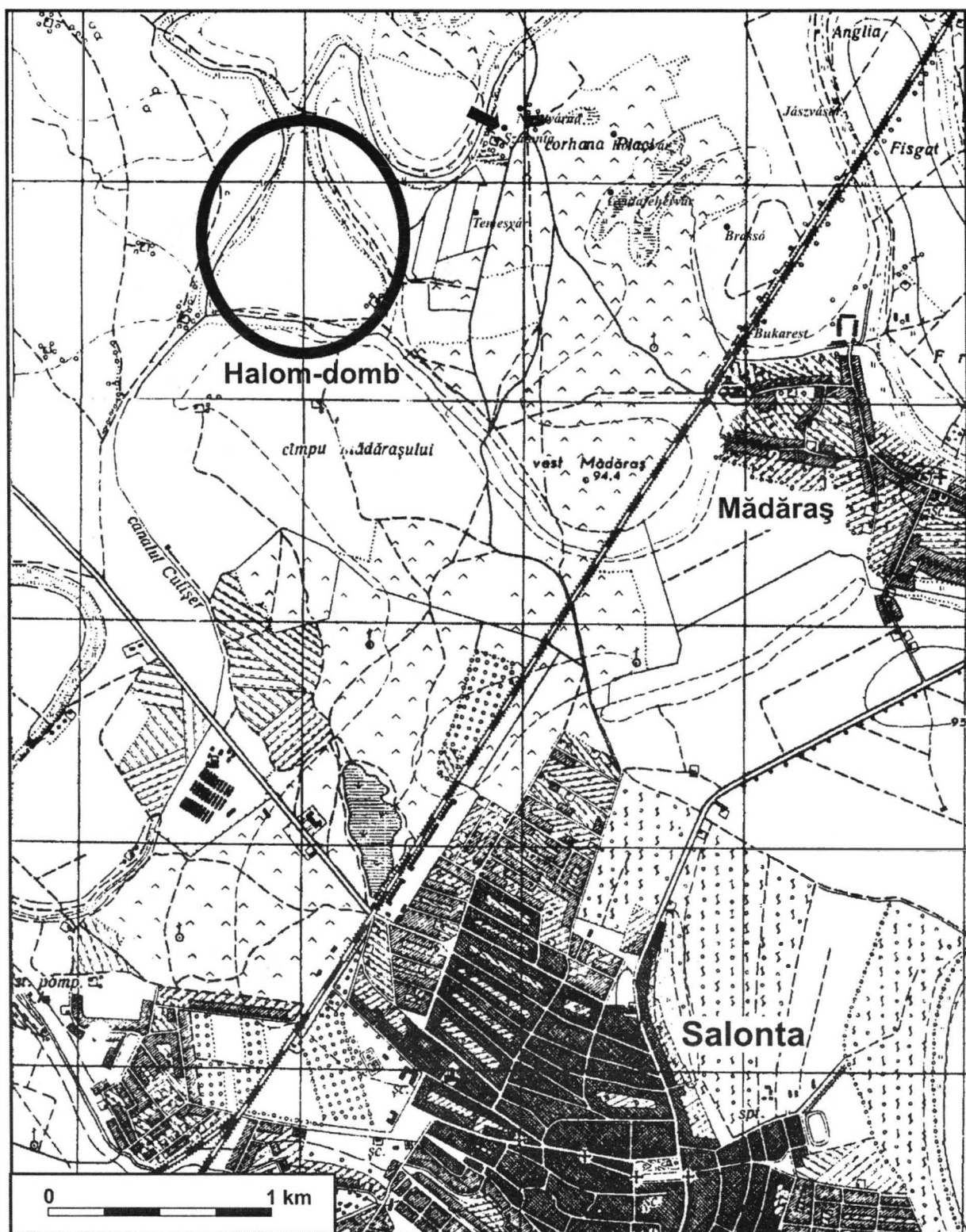
Pl. 25. Voiteni, grave 3: 1–2 quiver ans arrows; 3–7 bow; 8 quiver; 9 girth bukile; 10–12 stirrups and bit.



Pl. 26. Voiteni, grave 4: 1 needle; 2–3 hair ring; 4 finger ring; 5 bead; 6 bracelet; grave 6: 1 hair ring; 2 arrow; 3 strap buckle; 4 bit.

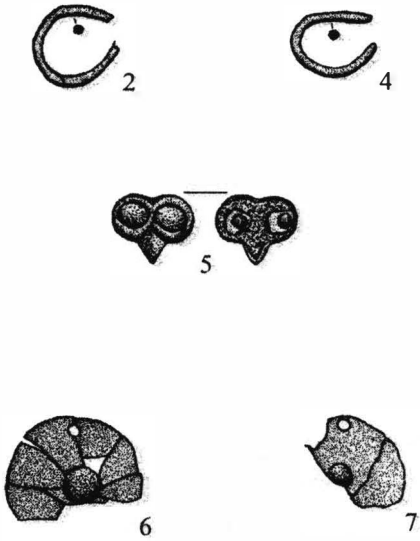
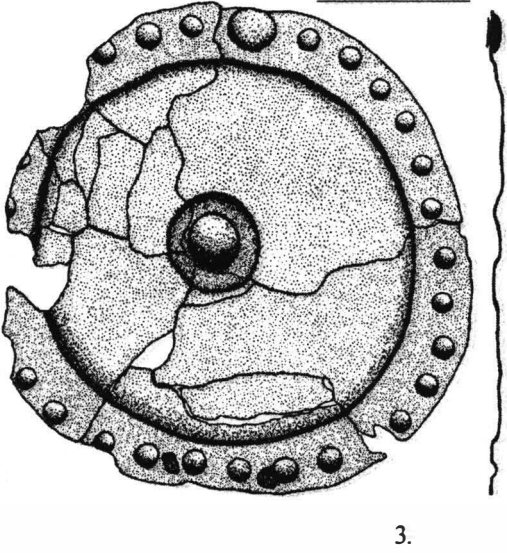
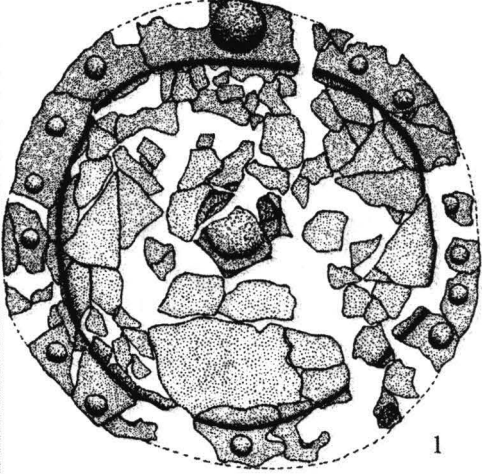
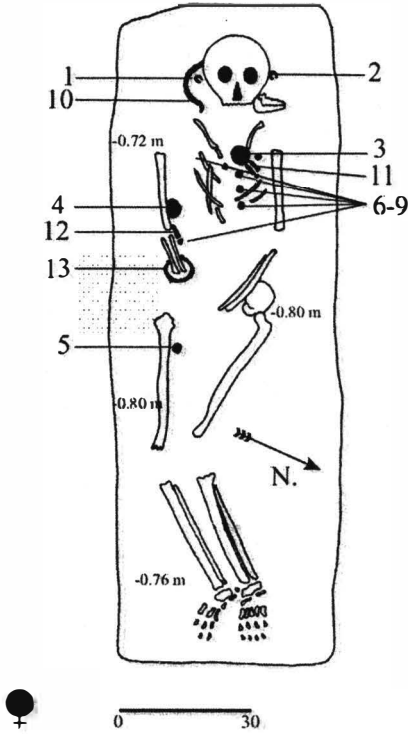


Pl. 27. Voiteni, a part of cemetery.

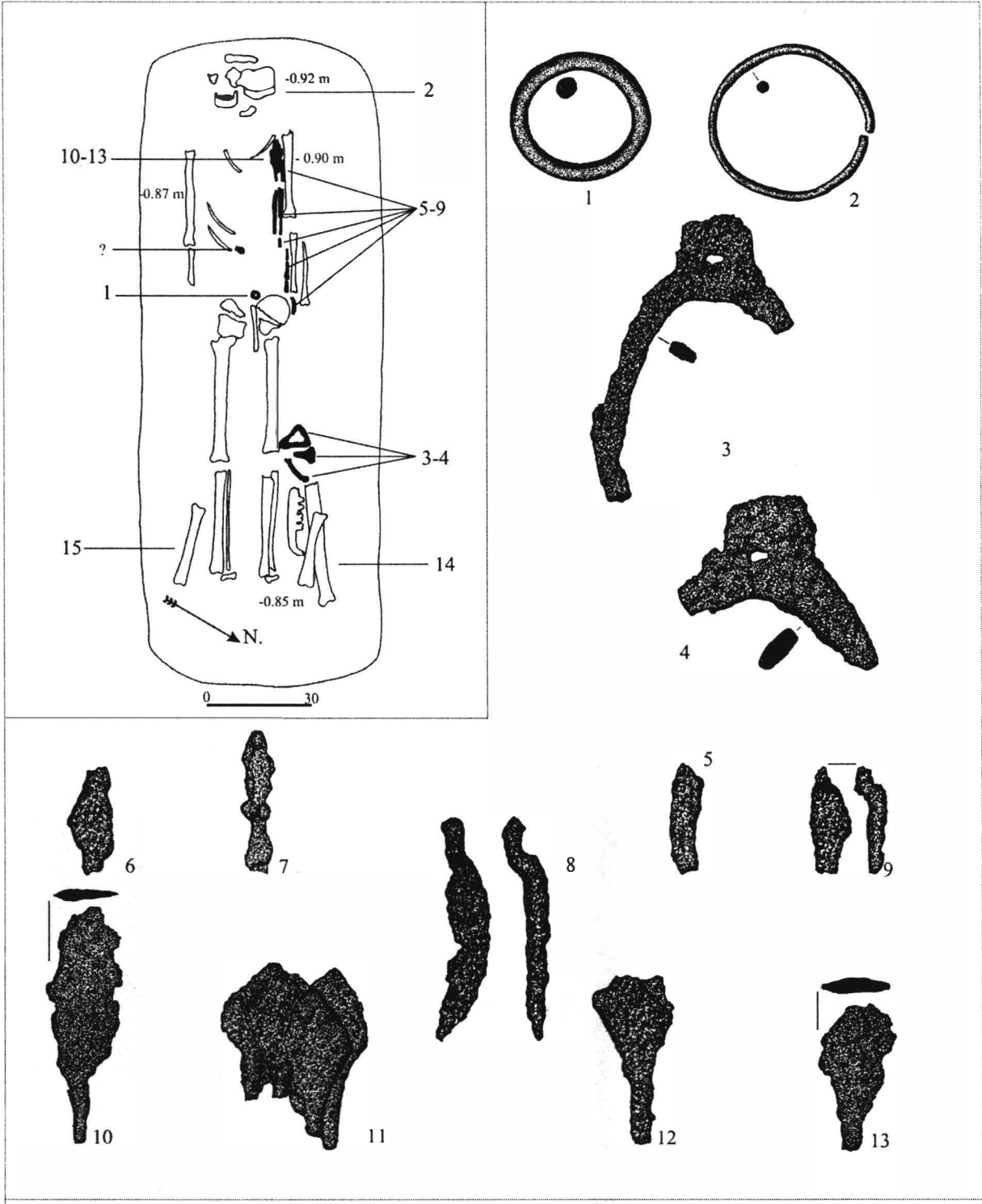


Pl. 28. Salonta–Movilă. Location of Conquest Period Cemetery.

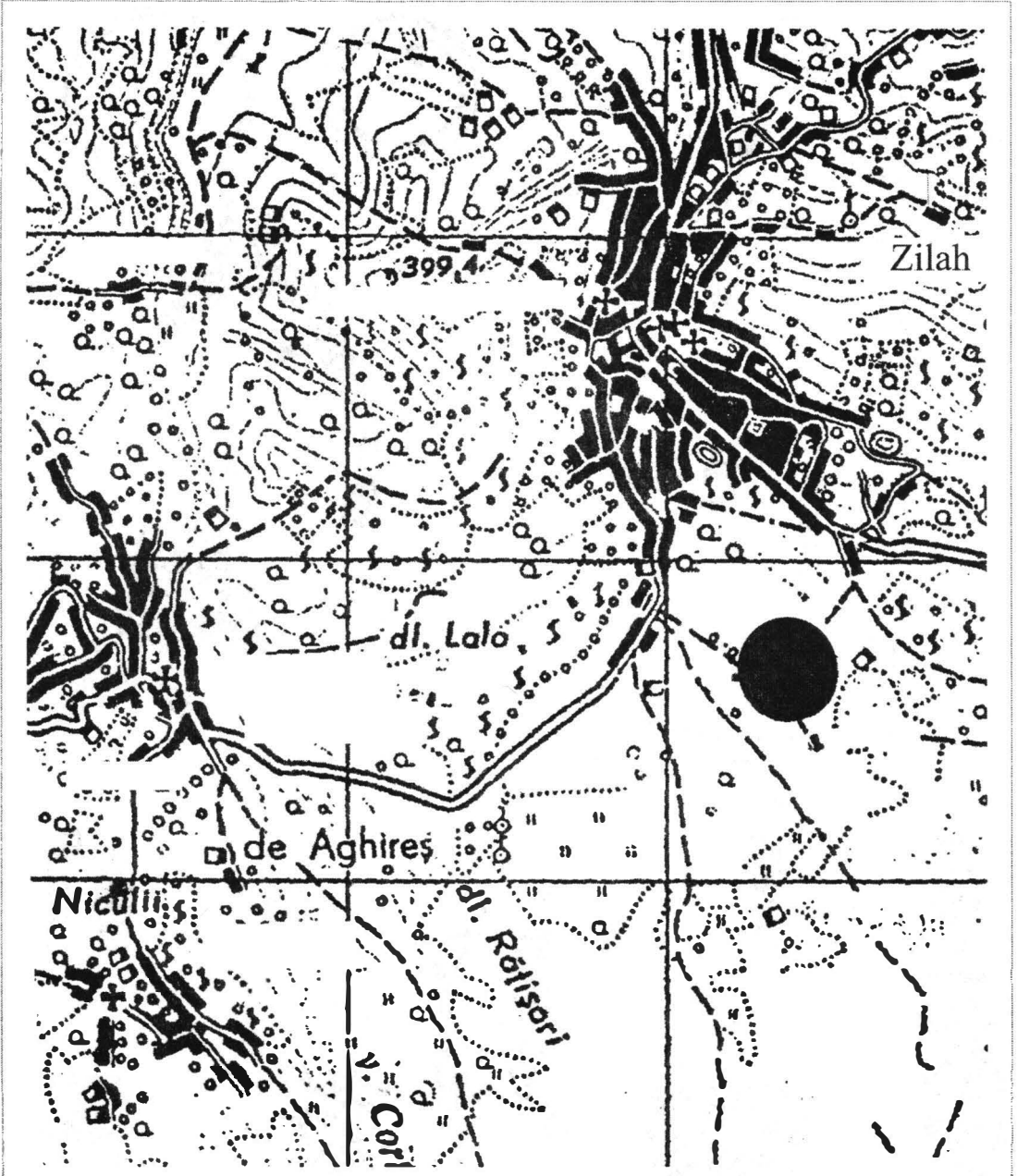
G. 1



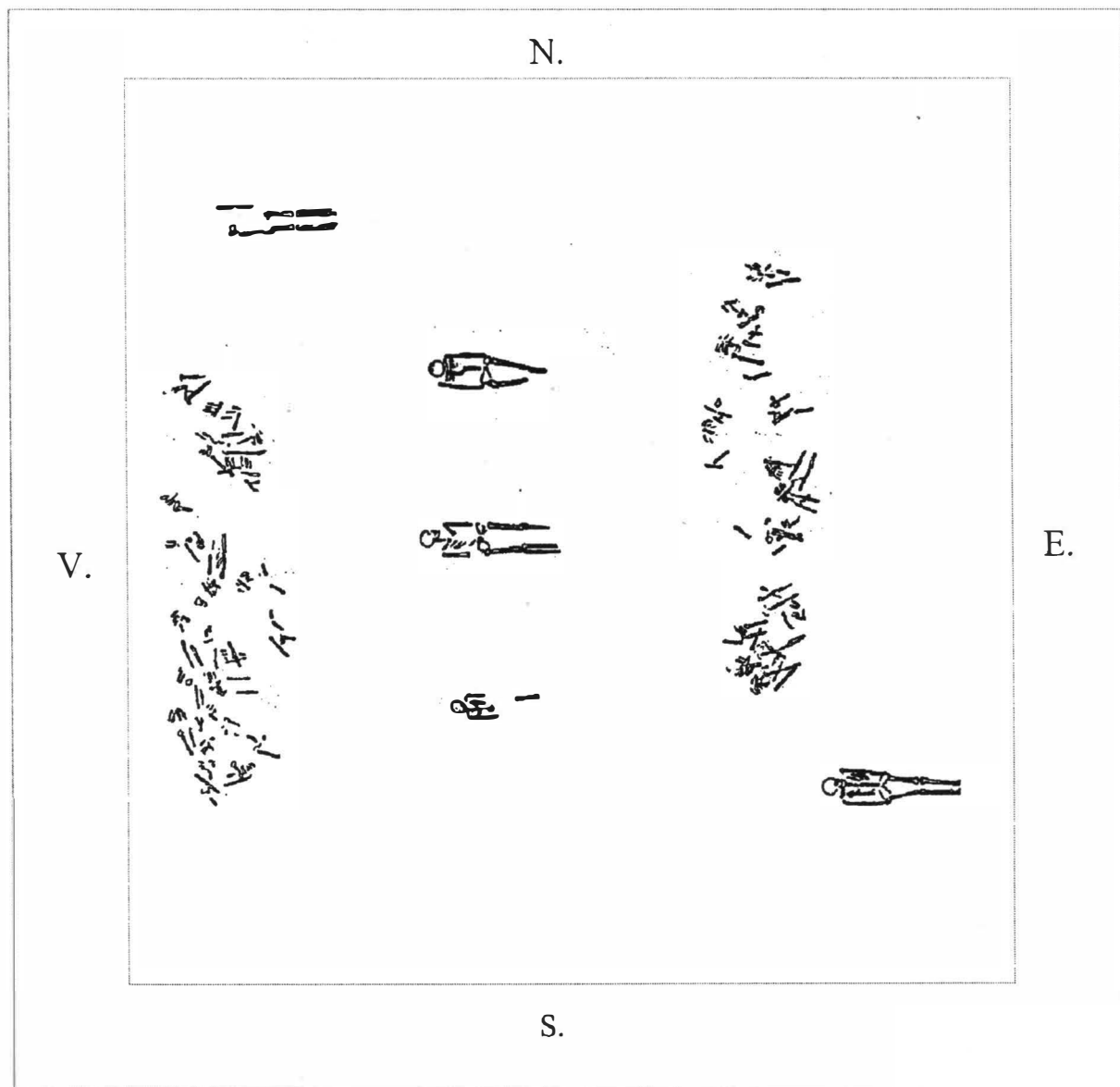
Pl. 29. Salonta-Movilă, grave 1: 1-2 hair rings; 3-4 plait disc; 5 gilded silver applique; 6-7 silver circular applique; 10 necklace; 11-12 strap ends; 13 bracelet.



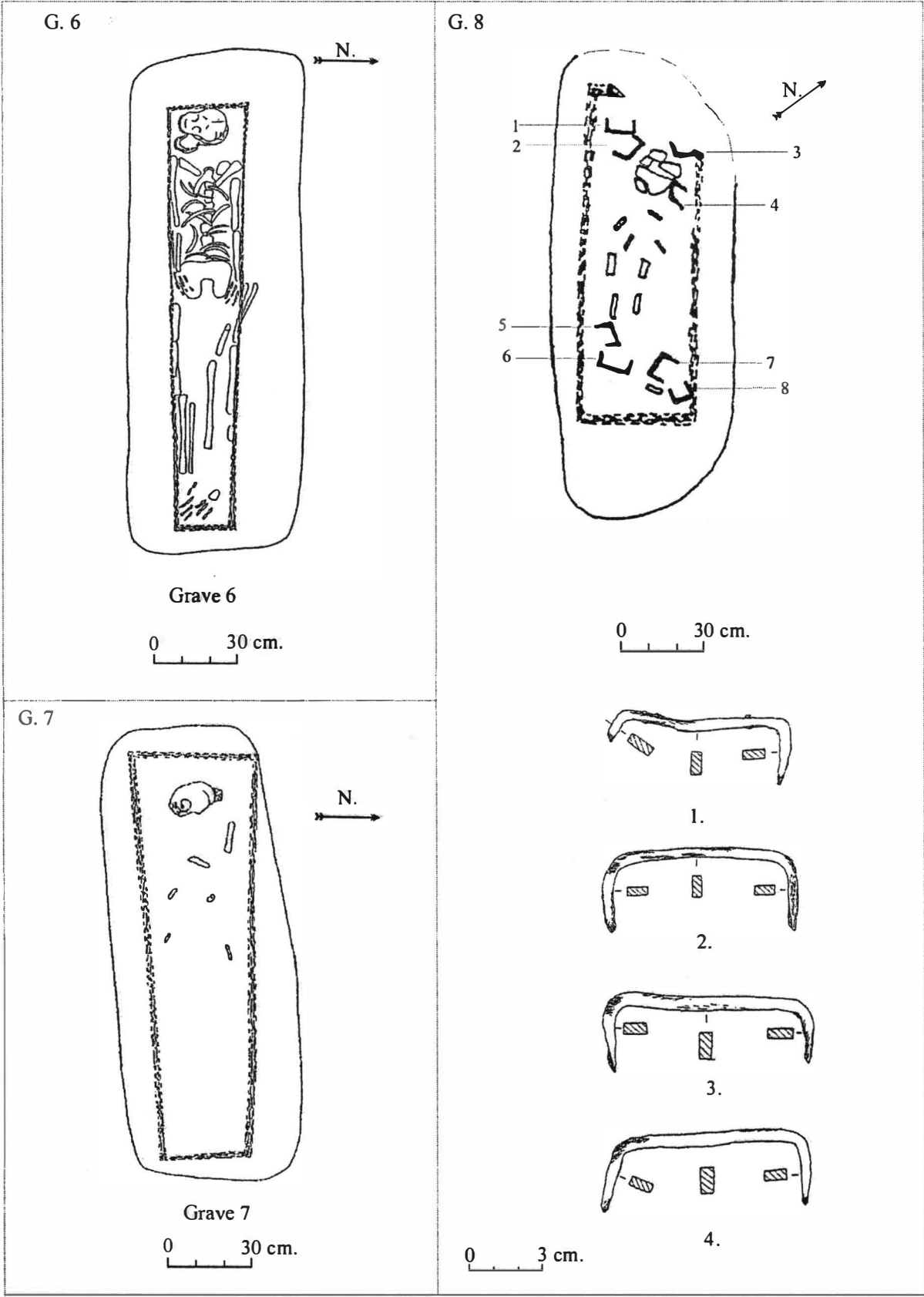
Pl. 30. Salonta–Movilă, grave 2: 1 quiver ring; 2 hair ring; 3–4 stirrups; 5–9 quiver; 10–13 arrows; 14–15 horse head and bones.



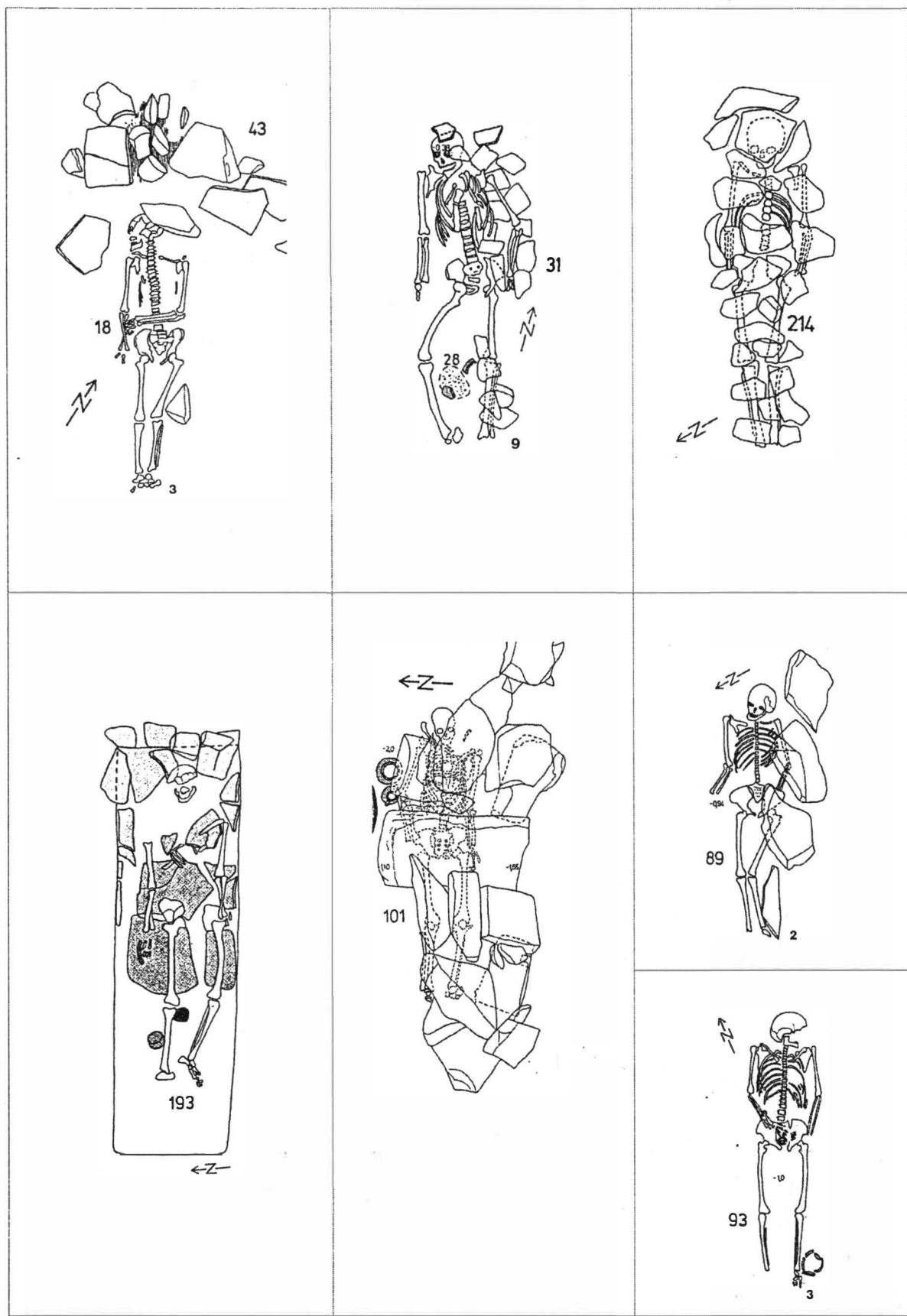
Pl. 31. Zalău-Palvar, geographical setting of the site.



Pl. 32. Zilah–Palvar, the military parade ground – topography of the 1989 excavation (without scales).

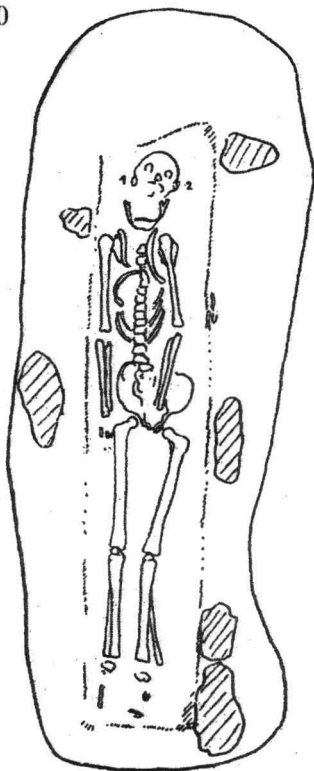


Pl. 33. Zalău–Palvar, grave 6; grave 7; grave 8: 1–8 coffin nails.



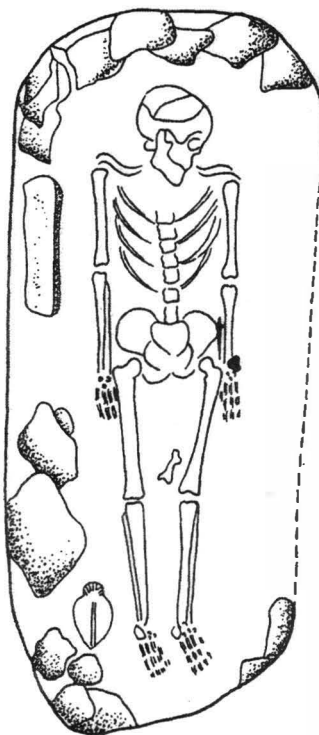
Pl. 34. Histria-Capul Viilor, graves with stone and different orientations.

G. 10



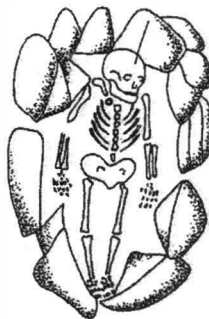
1.

G. 72



2.

G. 57



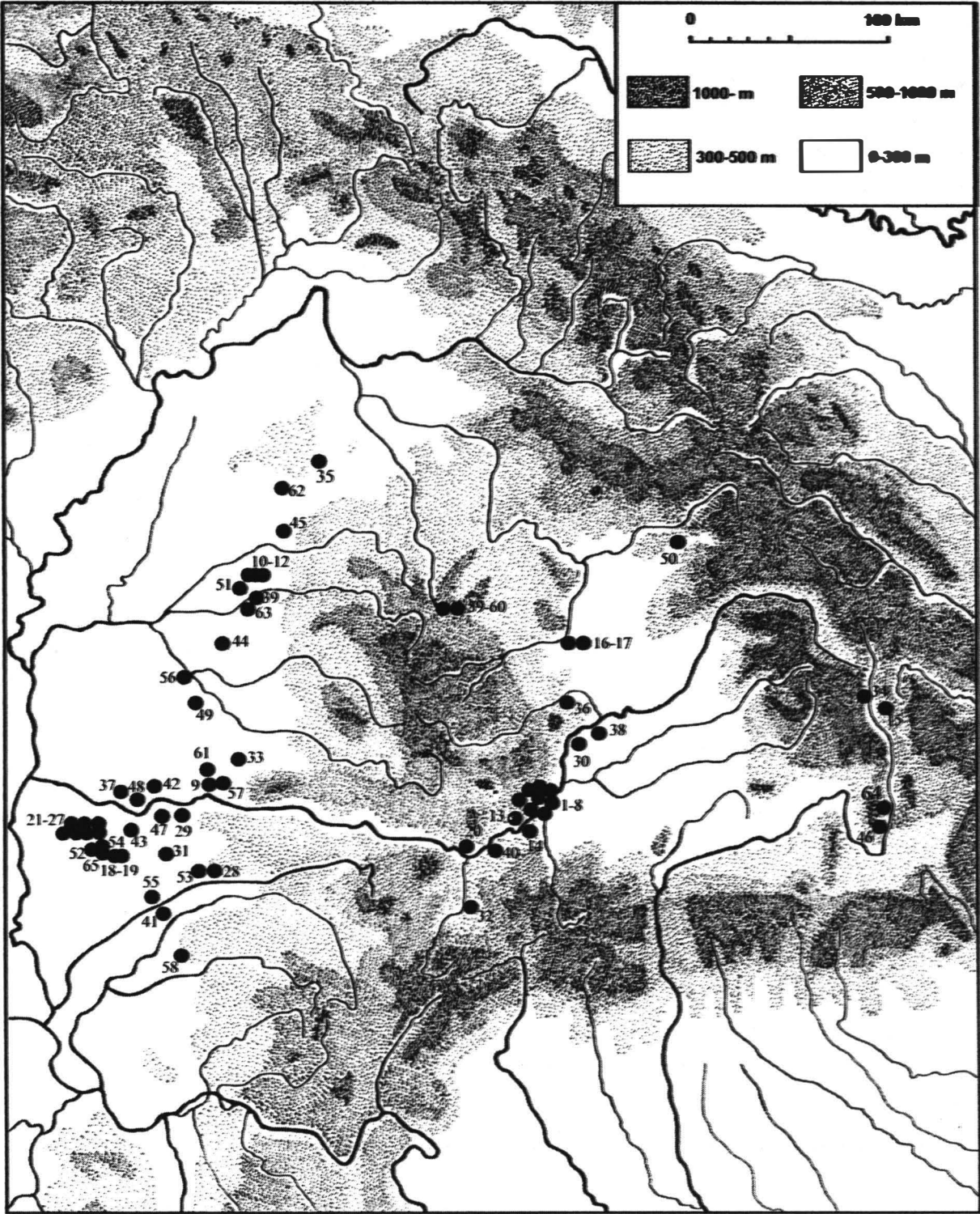
3.

G. 56

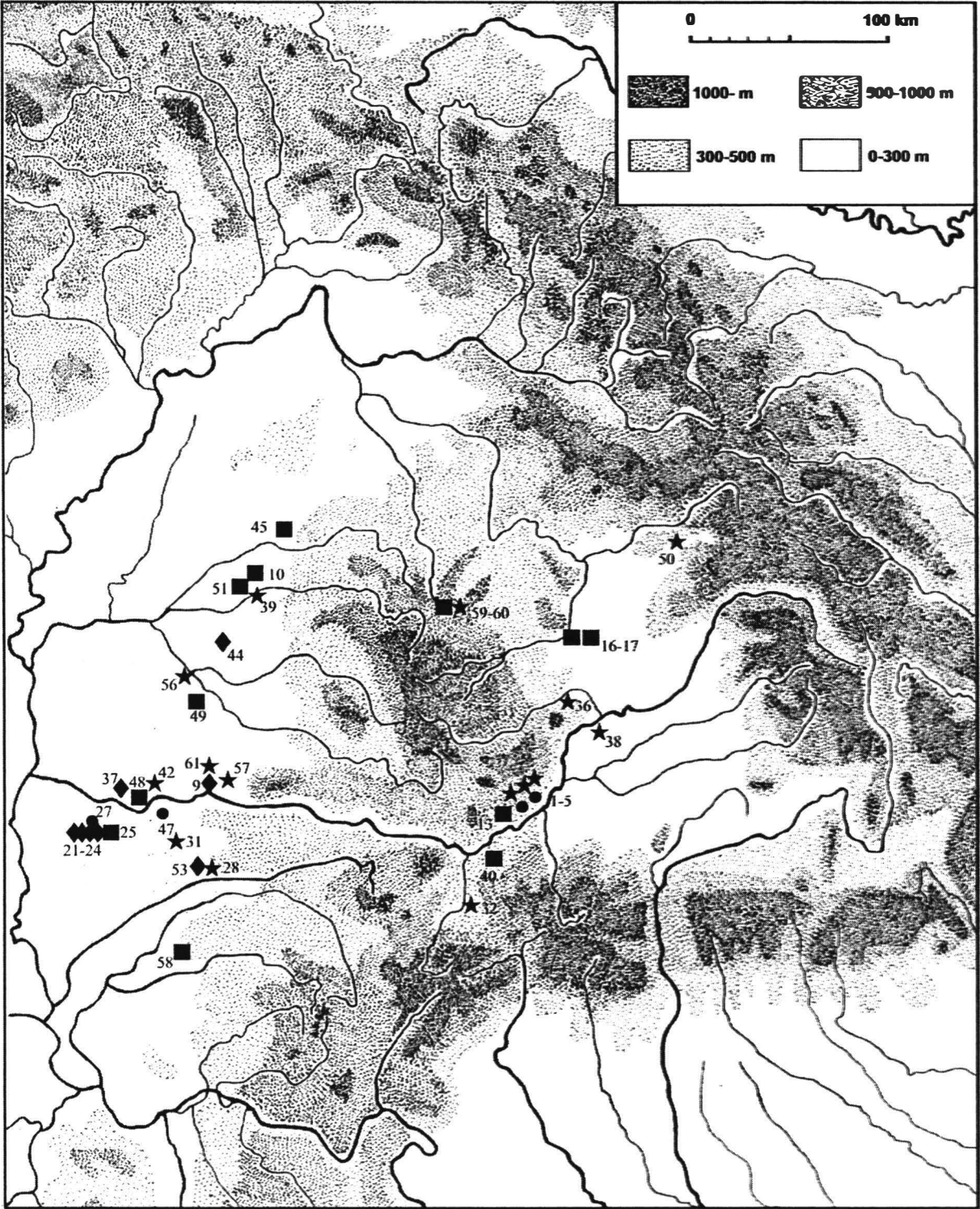


4.

Pl. 35. Parallels of the graves with stone coverings. 1 Sopron–Présháztelep, grave 10;  
2–4, Keszthely–Fenékpuszt, graves 72, 57, 56.

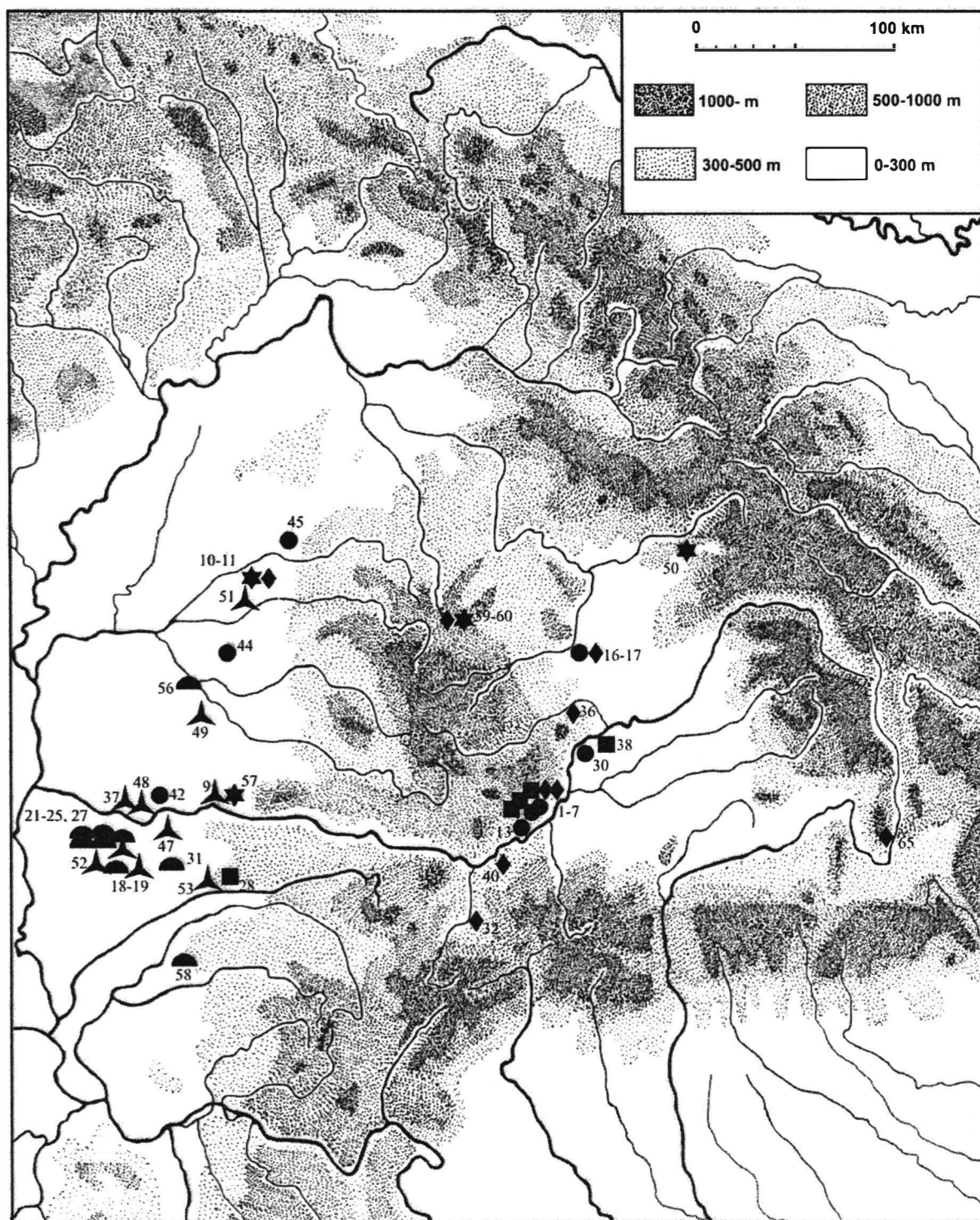


Map 1: List of the cemeteries and stray finds used.



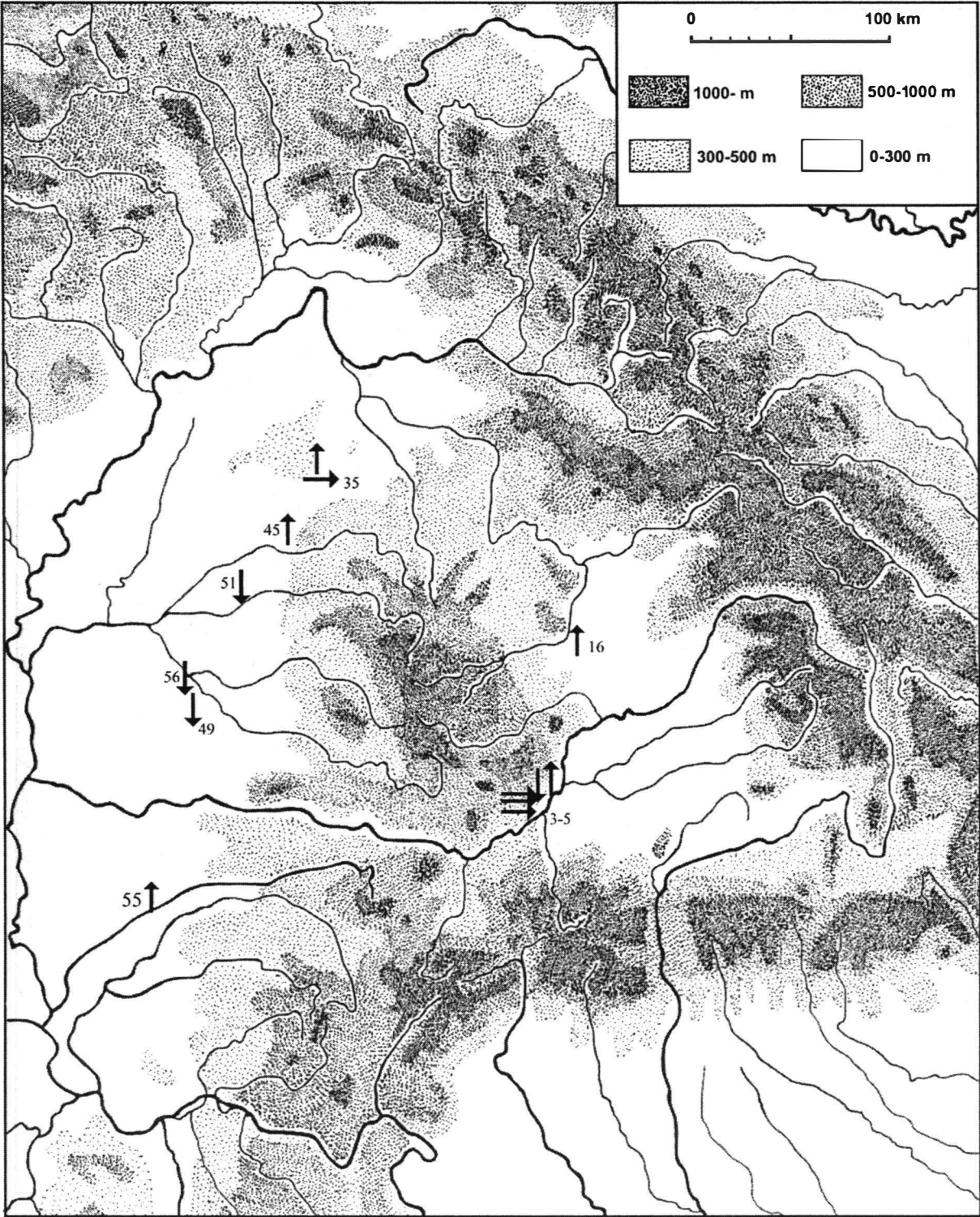
- single graves
- ◆ cemetery with a small number of graves
- middle size cemeteries
- ★ cemeteries with a large number of graves

Map 2: Distribution of cemeteries types in the 10th century.



- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| ● on the top of a hill/mountain | ◐ cemeteries dug in pre-conquest settlement mounds |
| ◆ on the rib of a hill          | ▲ natural projections                              |
| ■ on flat ground                | ★ inside the castle                                |

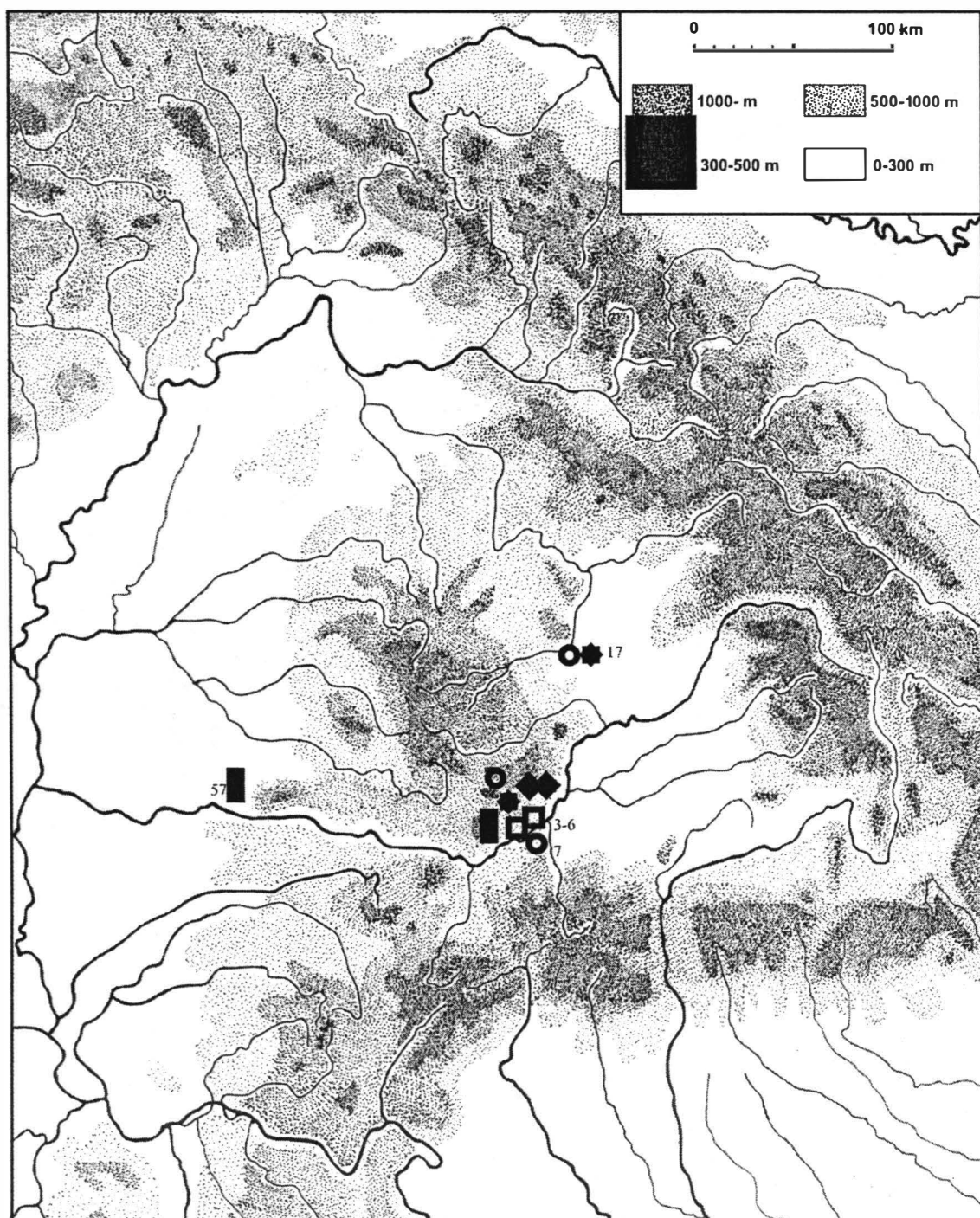
Map 3: Location of the cemeteries.



→ E-W. orientation  
↑ N-S. orientation

↓ S-N. orientation

Map 4: Burials of inverse orientation.



graves with limestone covering



graves with brick covering



gravepit lined with stone or limestone slabs

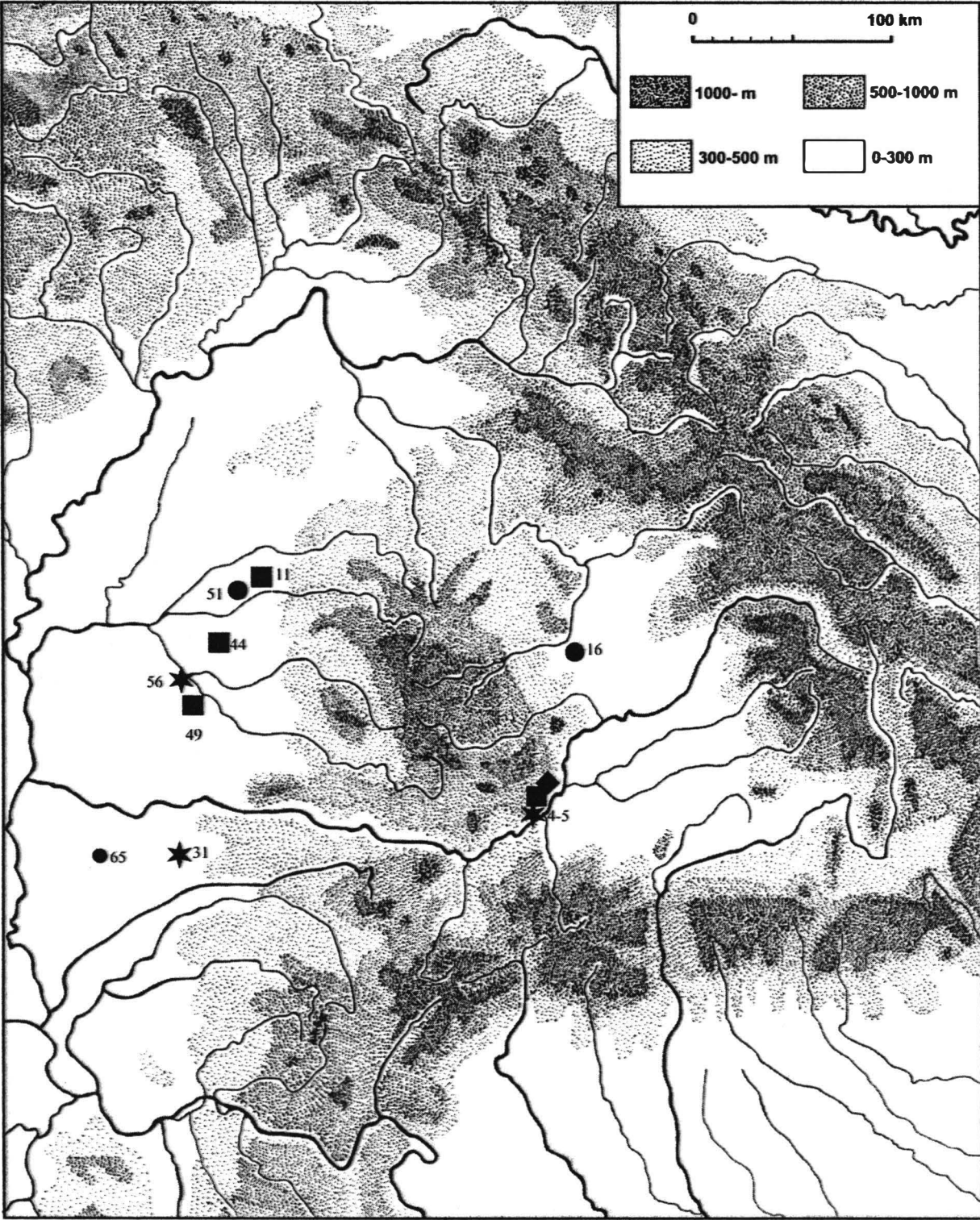


stone or brick slabs under the head



graves lined with stone or fractured limestone slabs from the Roman era and graves with stone covering

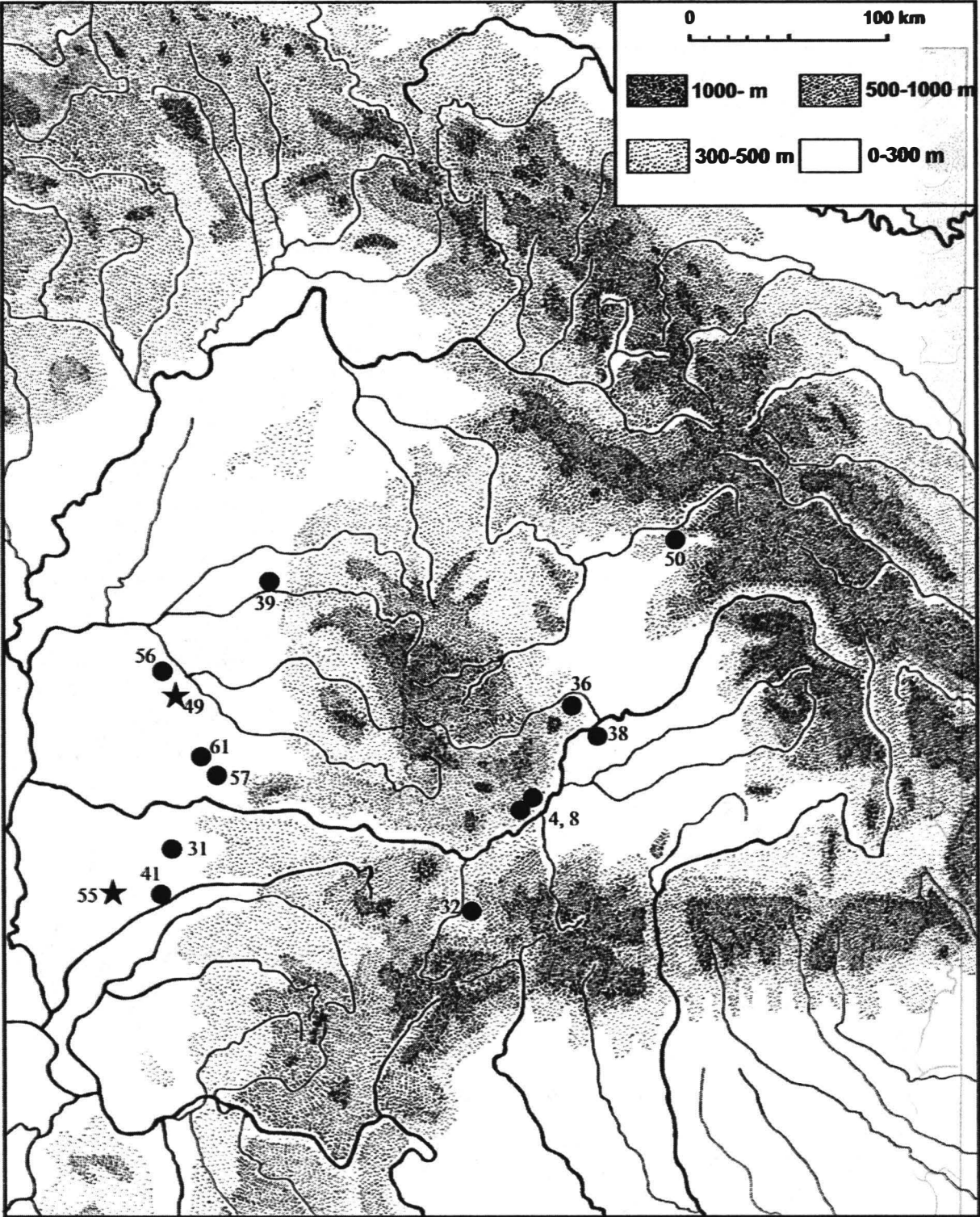
Map 5: Distribution of the graves with stone and brick covering and frame.



★ contracted burials  
■ legs brought up

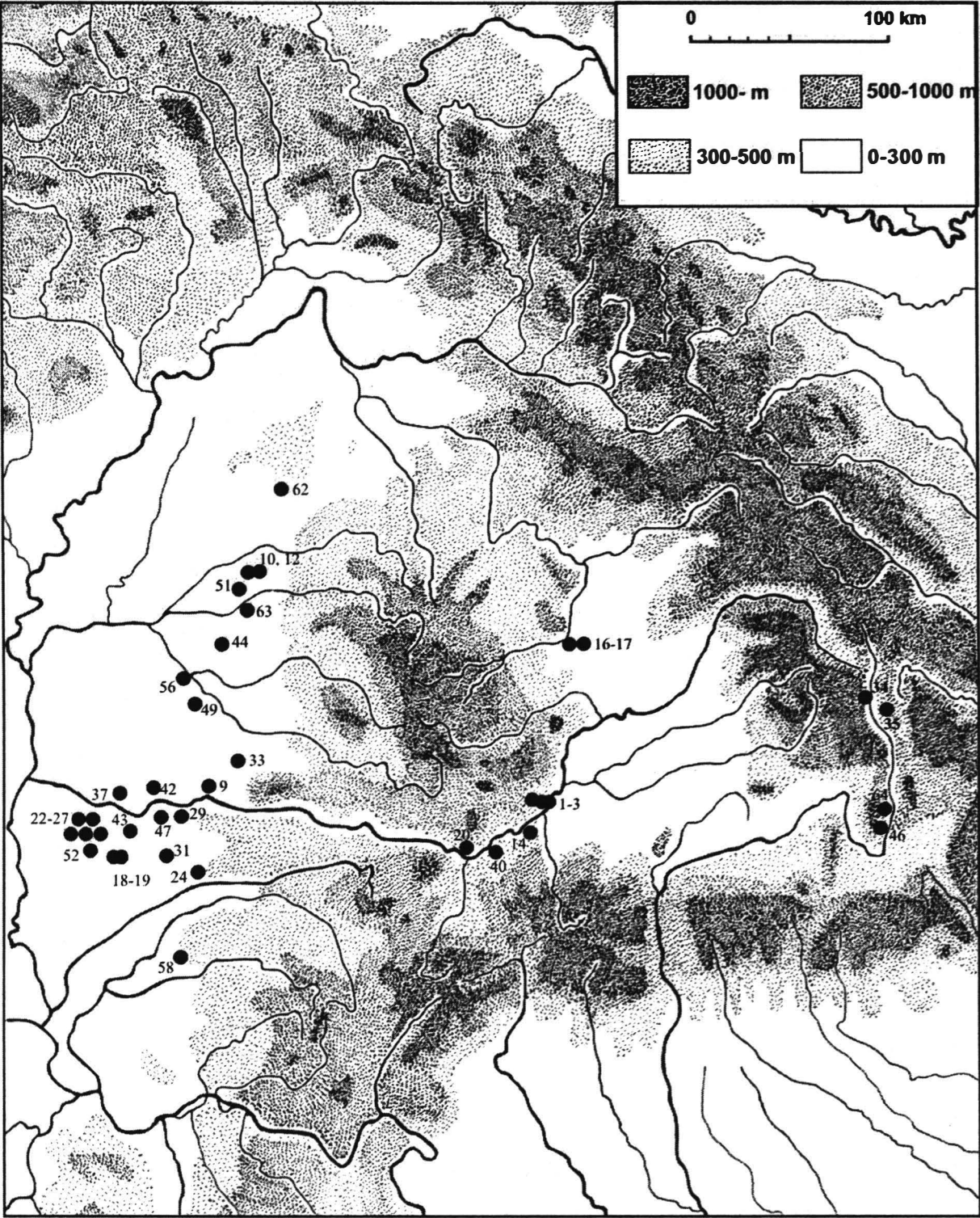
◆ frog position  
● skull burials

Map 6: Irregular burials.

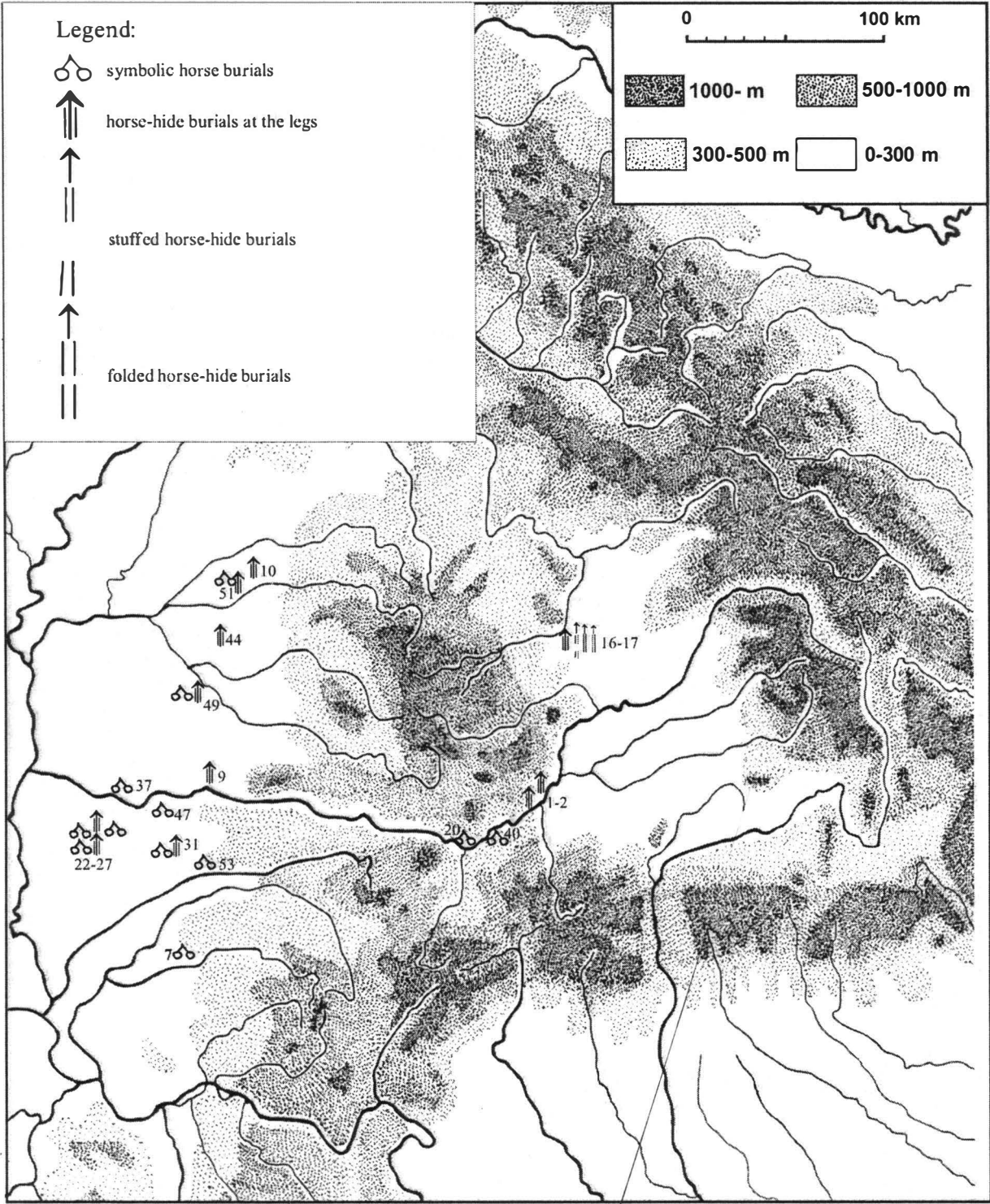


★ obuli in the graves from the 10th century      ● obuli in the graves from the 11th century

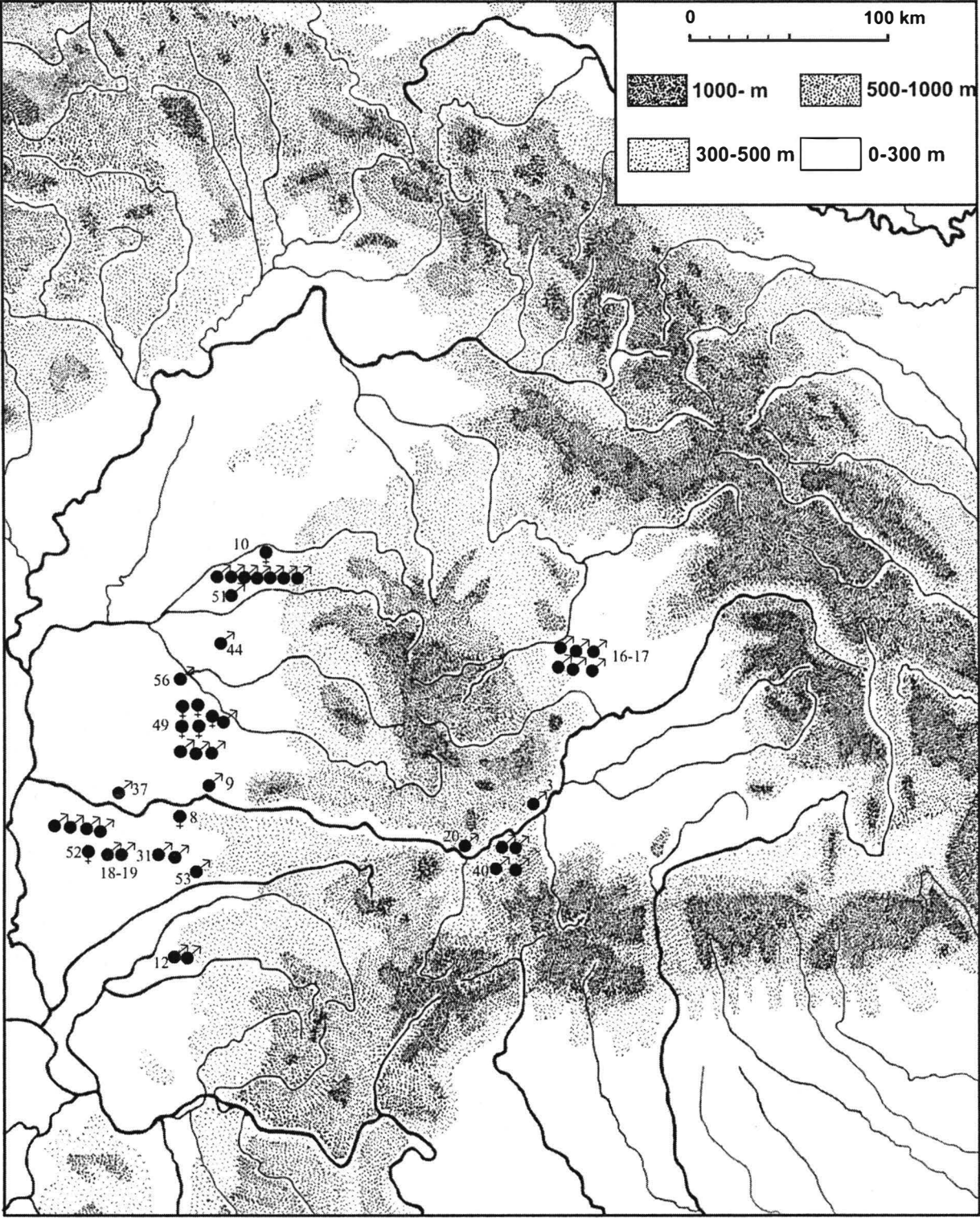
Map 7: Sites of *obolus* grave finds.



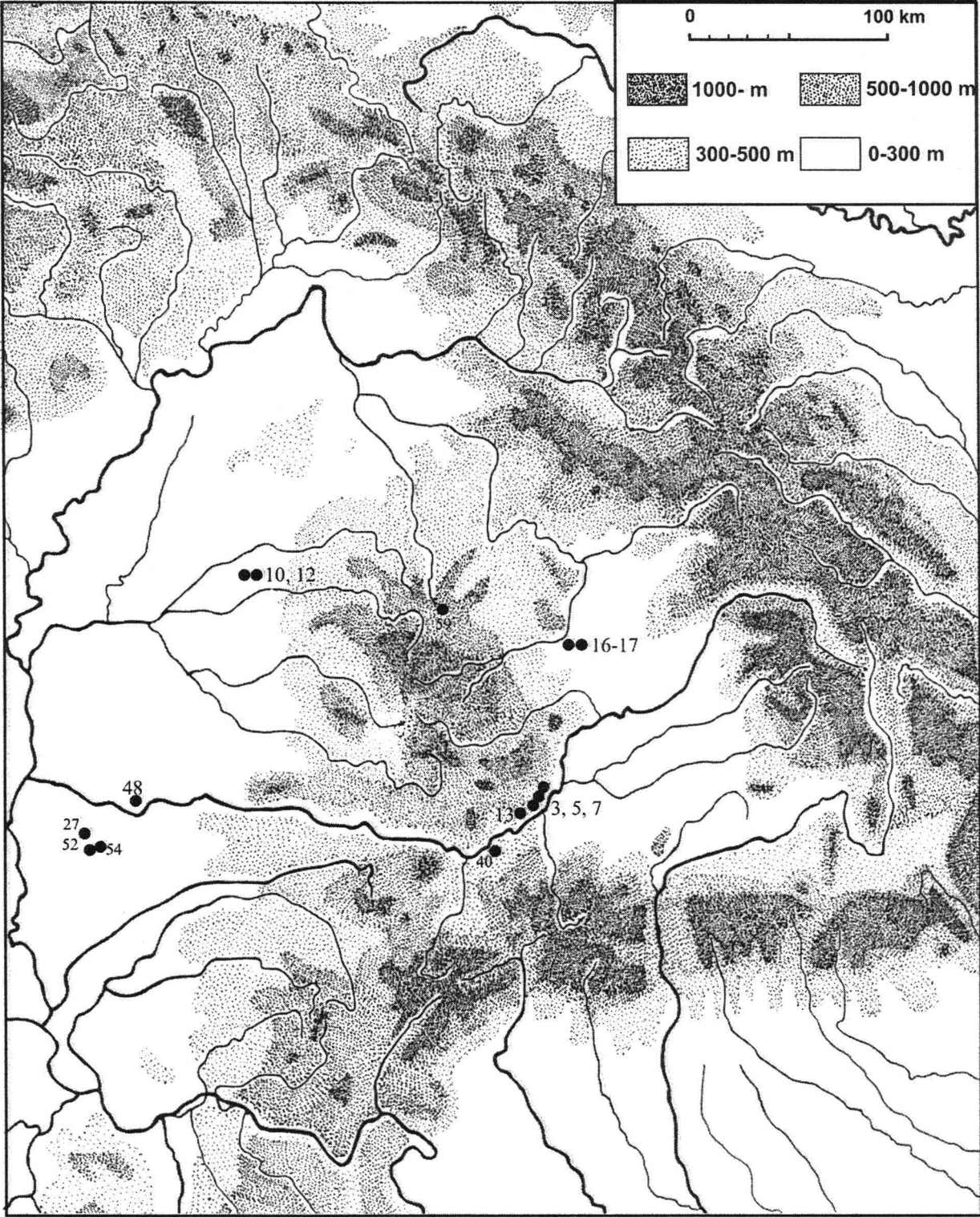
Map 8: Possible horse burial finds in Banat, Crişana, Transylvania.



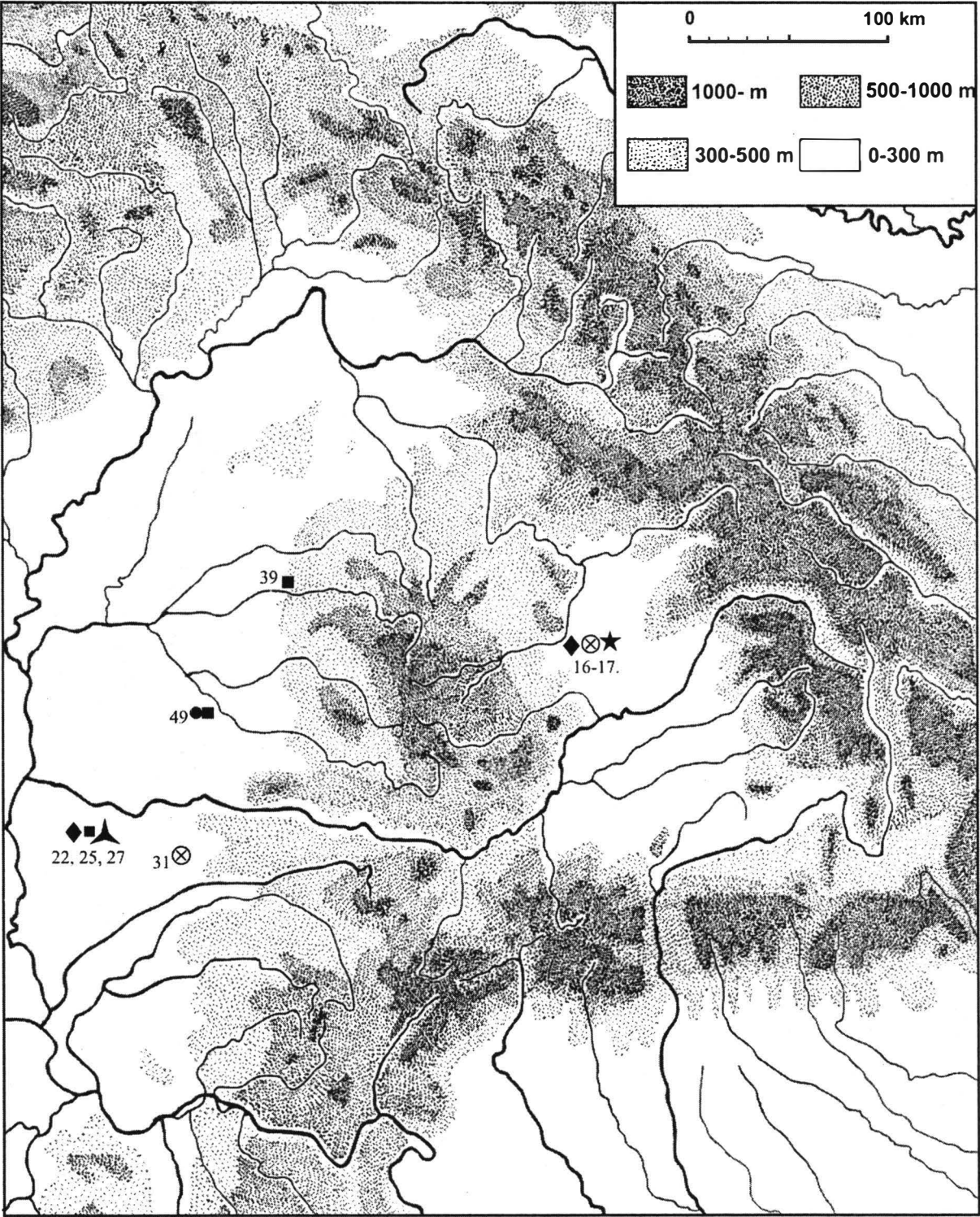
Map 9: Horse burial types in Banat, Crişana, Transylvania.



Map 10: Distribution of sexes in horse burial.



Map 11: Pottery sites in Banat, Crişana, Transylvania.

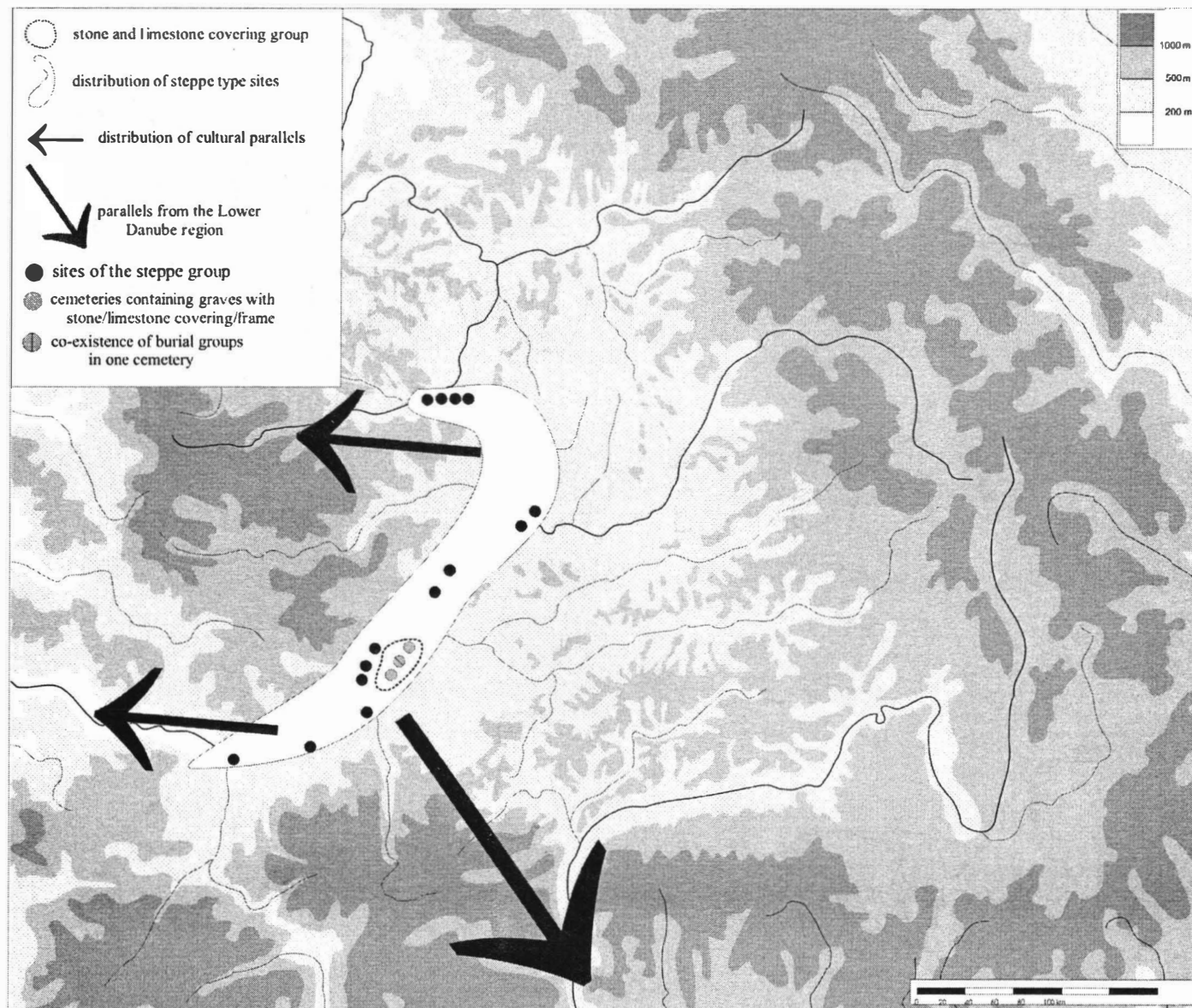


● ovine head  
■ ovine bones

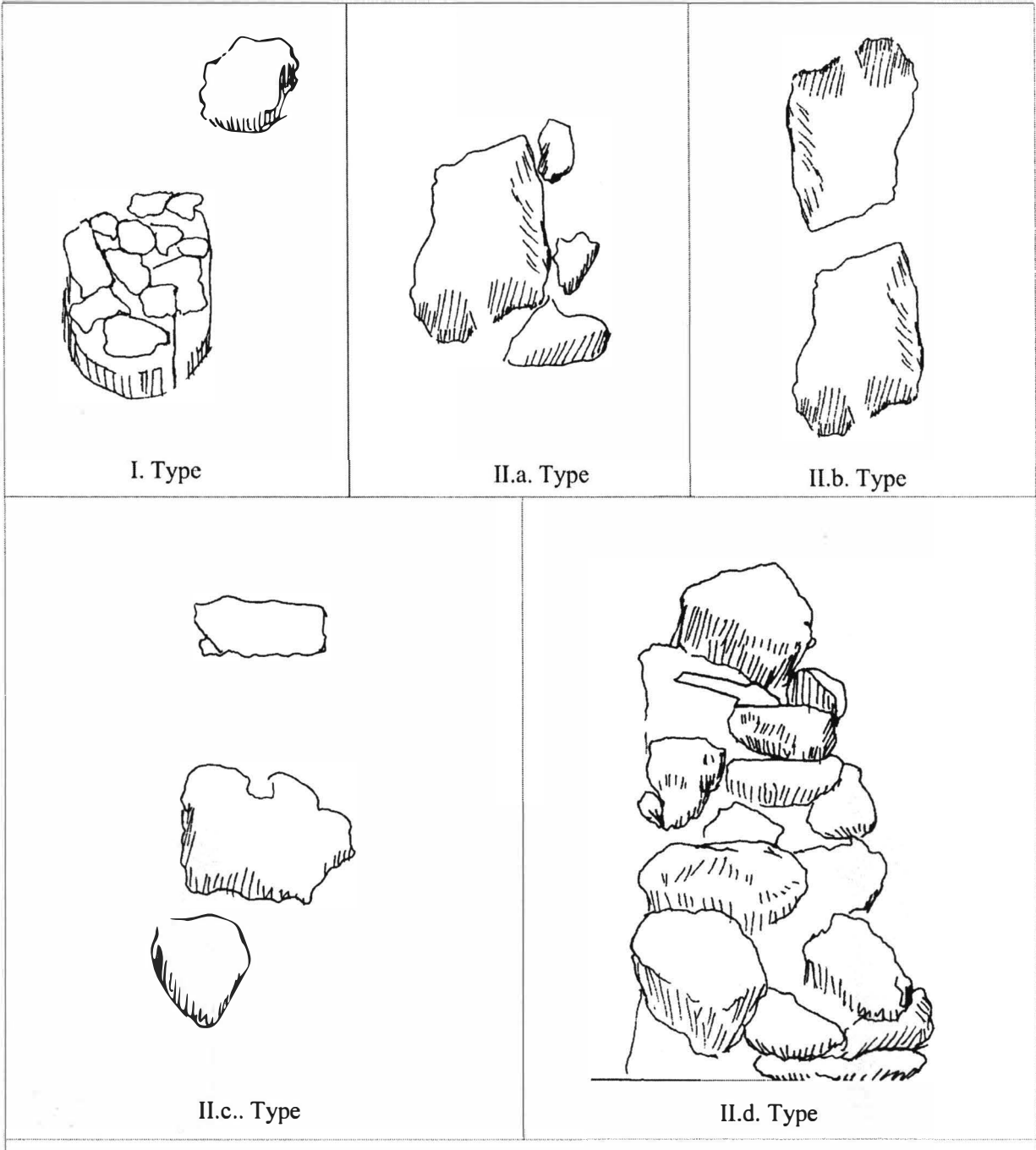
⊗ horse bones  
◆ pig bones

★ fowl bones  
▲ cattle bones

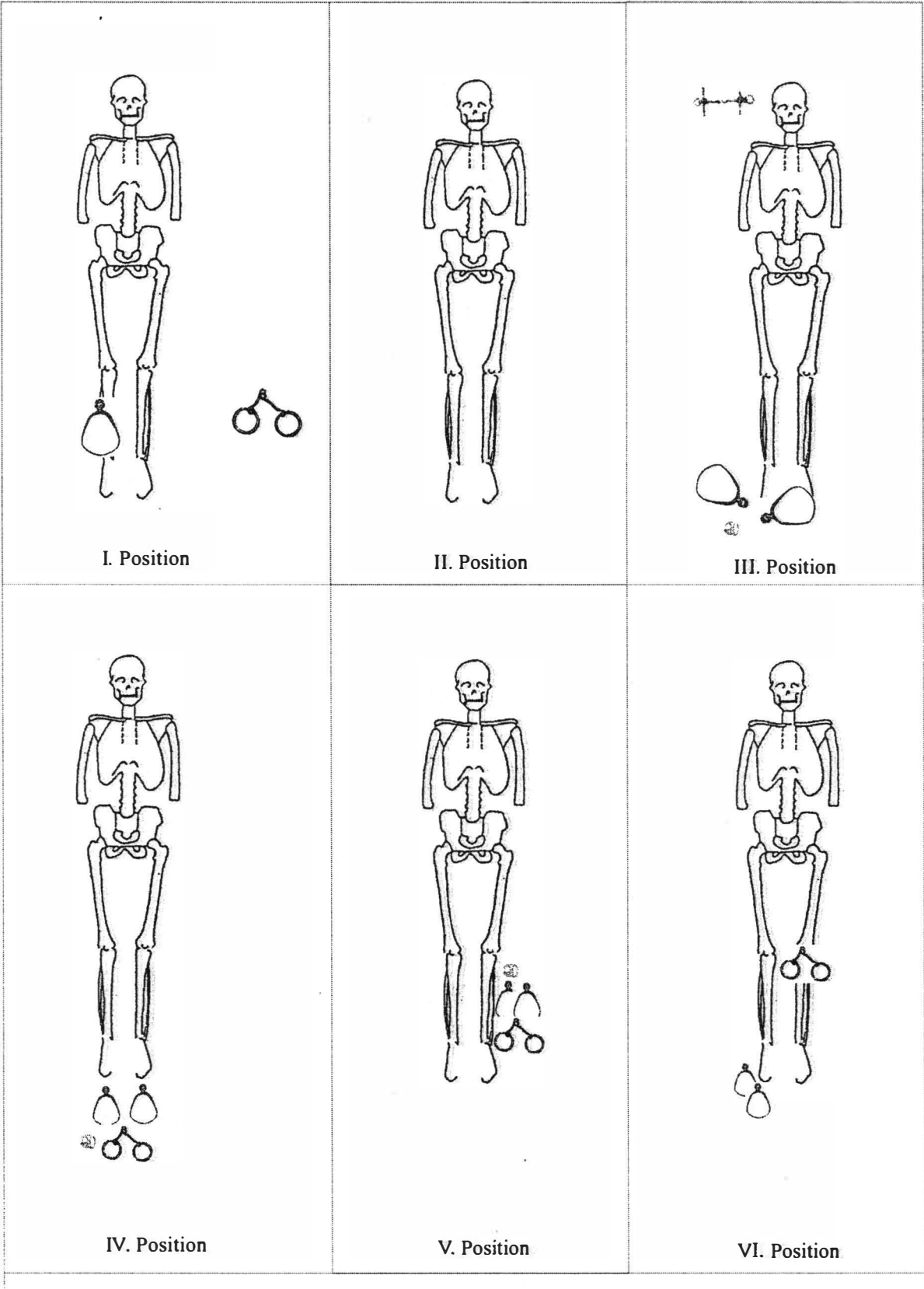
Map 12: Sites of animal bone finds in Banat, Crişana, Transylvania.



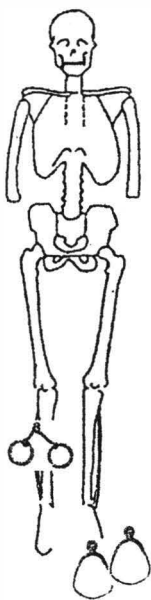
Map 13: Cultural links of burial customs of the 10th century.



Appendix 1: Types of the graves with limestone slab/covering.



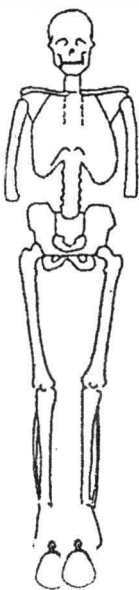
Appendix 2: Types and variants of horse burials.



VII. Position



VIII. Position



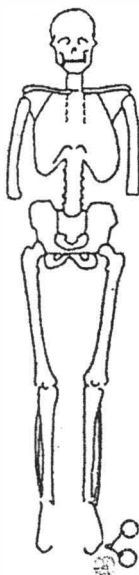
I. Position



II. Position

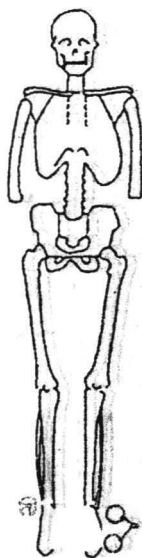


III. Position

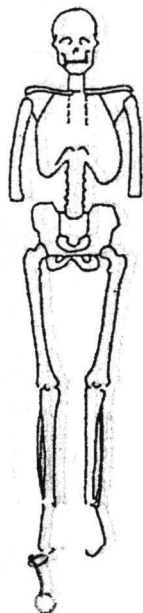


I. Position

Appendix 3: Types and variants of horse burials.



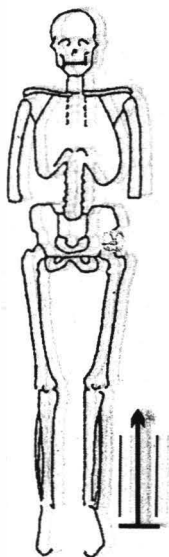
II. Position



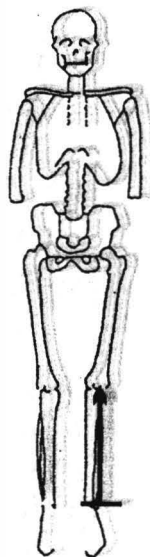
III. Position



IV. Position



I. Position

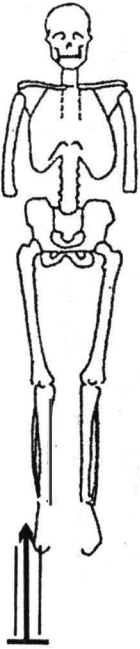


II. Position



III. Position

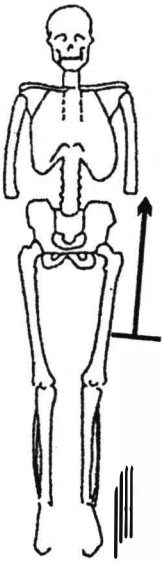
Appendix 4: Types and variants of horse burials.



IV. Position



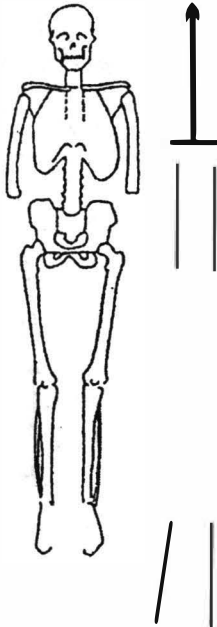
V. Position



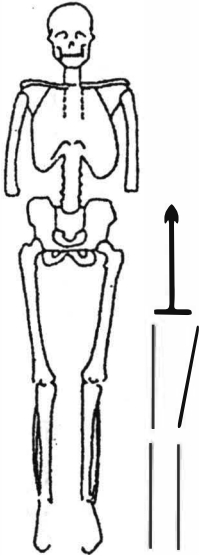
VI. Position



VII. Position

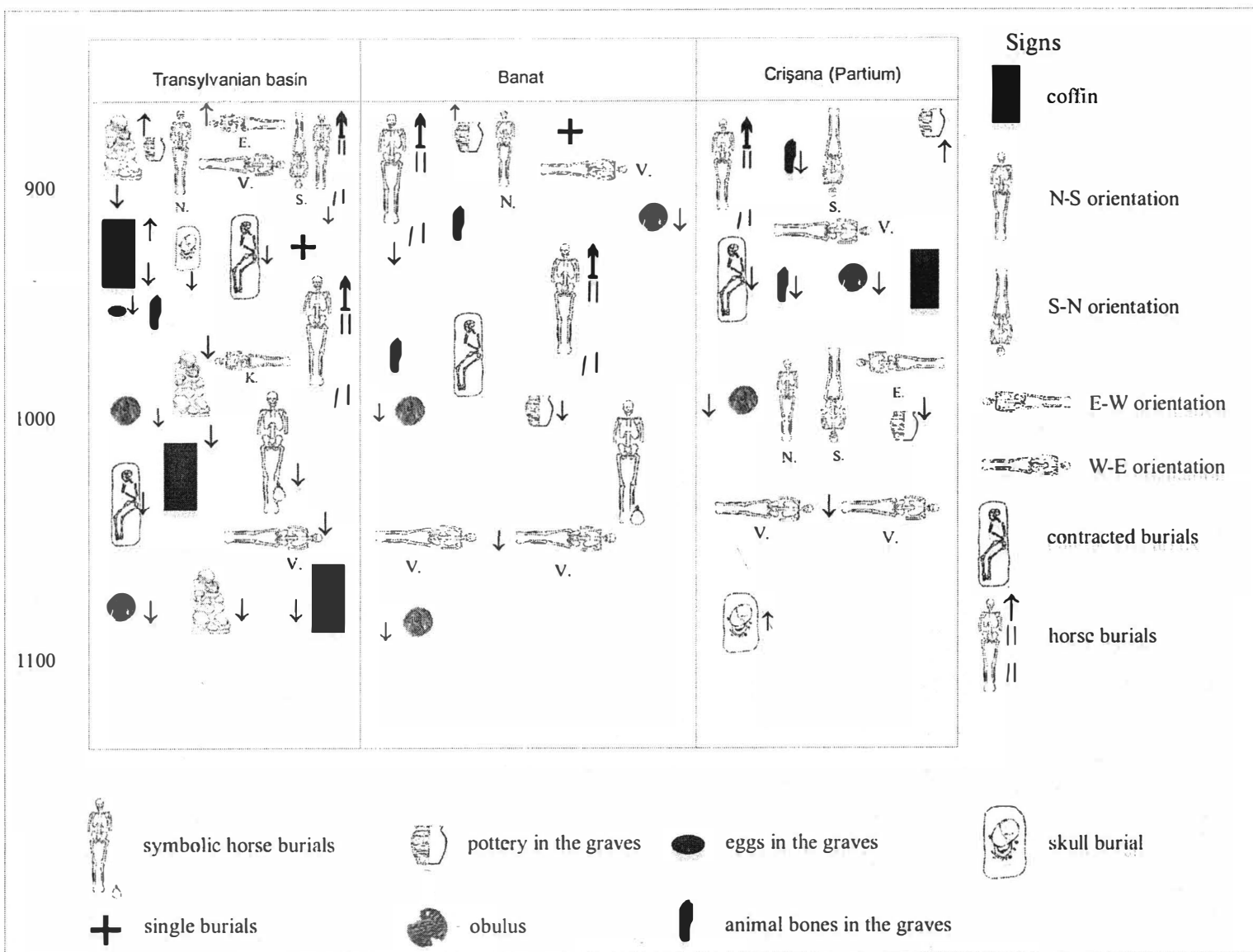


I. Position



I. Position

Appendix 5: Types and variants of horse burials.



Appendix 6: Chronological table of burial customs.

### List of the cemeteries and finds:

1. Alba Iulia–Roman Catholic Cathedral (Alba county)  
1 grave. Unpublished.
2. Alba Iulia–SW part of the fortress (Alba county)  
1 grave. Heitel r. r., 1986, 241, tb. 4/4
3. Alba Iulia–Stația de salvare (Alba county)  
1300 graves. Unpublished.
4. Alba Iulia–Vânătorilor street (Alba county)  
1300 graves. Unpublished. Some information Blăjan M., Stoicovici E., Botezatu D., 1990–1993, 273–290.
5. Alba Iulia–Brândușei street (Alba county)  
57 grave excavated in 1997, 1999, 2001.
6. Alba Iulia–Baia Romană (Alba county)  
35 graves. Unpublished.
7. Alba Iulia–Izvorul Împăratului (Alba county)  
22 graves. Unpublished. CCArh, 2002, 33.
8. Alba Iulia–Păclișa (Alba county)  
3 graves were discovered to H. Ciucudeanu and A. Dragotă..
9. Arad–Ceala (Arad county)  
1 grave and a stray sword. E. Dörner, 1970, 445.
10. Biharea–Șumuleu (Bihor county)  
8 graves. J. Karácsony, 1903, 66–67, 405–412.
11. Biharea–Fortress (Bihor county)  
11 graves from Fortress. Unpublished.
12. Biharea–Middle of the Fortress (Bihor county)  
Stray finds from 1862. K. Horedt, 1968, 422–428.
13. Blandiana "B" cemetery (Alba county)  
11 graves. K. Horedt, 1966, 275–289.
14. Blandiana "C" cemetery (Alba county)  
1 disturbed grave. Unpublished. Information with photos by E. Amlacher.
15. Ciucsângeorgiu (Harghita county)  
Stray find. Unpublished.
16. Cluj-Napoca–Plugariilor street (Cluj county)  
26 graves. Unpublished.
17. Cluj-Napoca–Zápolya street (Alba county)  
11 graves. I. Kovács, 1942, 85–115; Gy. László, 1945.

18. Comloşu Mare–northern part of the town (Timiş county)

Disturbed grave. Gy. Kisléghi Nagy, 1911, 318–319.

19. Comloşu Mare–Posztzsellás (Timiş county)

Disturbed grave. Gy. Kisléghi Nagy, 1911, 321.

20. Deva–Micro 15 (Hunedoara county)

7 graves. Graves 7 was published by K. Horedt and Z. Pinter. K. Z. Horedt, 1986, tb. 39; K. Z. Pinter, 1994–96, 235–245.

21–26. Dudeştii Vechi–mound II–VI, VII (Timiş county)

Mound II–IV: Gy. Kisléghi Nagy, 1904, 417–421; Gy. Kisléghi Nagy, 1907, 274–276.

27. Dudeştii Vechi–Movila lui Dragomir (Timiş county)

25 graves disturbed, 4 graves were excavated. D. Tănase, A. Bejan, E. Gáll, Gh. Kalcic, 2004(in press).

28. Dumbrăviţa (Timiş county)

3 graves: a man, a woman and a child. Unpublished.

29. Felnac (Arad county)

Stray finds (necklaces, stirrups). Unpublished.

30. Gâmbaş (Alba county)

12 graves. M. Roska, 1936, 164–166.

31. Hodoni–Pocioarele (Timiş county)

18 graves. A. Bejan, M. Moga, 1979, 159–169; Fl. Draşovean, D. Ţeicu, Muntean, 1996, 34–54, LV–LXIX.

32. Hunedoara–Kincseshegy (Hunedoara county)

57 graves. M. Roska, 1913, 166–198.

33. Mâsca–H. Gruber and Nachtrebel Ödön's garden (Arad county)

Number of graves unknown. Cca. 6 graves with horse burials. L. Réthy, 1898, 124–128.

34. Miercurea Ciuc–Jigodin (Harghita county)

Stray finds (stirrup, bit). Unpublished.

35. Moftinu Mic (Sătmar county)

13 graves excavated. Unpublished. Information by J. Némethi.

36. Moldoveneşti (Cluj county)

57 graves. M. Roska, 1913, 125–168, 169–187.

37. Nădlac–cimitir (Arad county)

3 graves disturbed. Unpublished.

38. Noşlac–Pompa de apă (Alba county)

3 graves. Unpublished.

39. Oradea–“In vii” (Bihar county)

7 graves. S. Dumitraşcu, 1983, pl. XXIV.

40. Orăștie–Dealul Pemilor X2 (Hunedoara county)

From 54 graves, only 9 were published. S. A. Luca, K. Z. Pinter, 1995, 17–44.

41. Pădureni (Timiș county)

Stray finds. Unpublished.

42. Pecica (Arad county)

Large cemetery. Unpublished

43. Periam (Arad county)

Large cemetery. Unpublished.

44. Salonta–Movilă (Bihor county)

2 graves. Unpublished. With thanks to Attila Lakatos for the grave sketches.

45. Sălacea–Vidahegy (Sătmar county)

12 graves. N. Chidioșan, 1969, 611–616.

46. Sfântu Gheorghe–Esprestető (Covasna county)

Single grave, disturbed. Z. Székely, 1945.

47. Sânpetru German–teritoriul G.A.S. (Arad county)

Single grave, E. Dörner, 1970, 457.

48. Șeitin–Movila de nisip (Arad county)

4 graves. L. Mărghitan, 1965, 581–585.

49. Șiclău–Gropoaie (Arad county)

12 graves and 7–8 disturbed graves. M. Russu, E. Dörner, 1962, 705–712.

50. Șirioara–Podirei (Bistrița Năsăud county)

7 graves. Unpublished.

51. Tărian–Dâmbul lui Ciordaș (Bihor county)

12 graves. A. Lakatos, 2004 (in press).

52. Teremia Mare–Stóck Kristóf's garden (Timiș county)

Small cemetery with several graves. J. Hampel, 1905, 560–564.

53. Timișoara–Cioreni (Timiș county)

40 graves. A. Rădulescu, E. Gáll, 2001, 156–195.

54. Tomnatic (Timiș county)

Small cemetery with unknown number of graves. L. Kühn, 1911, 182–183.

55. Uivar (Timiș county)

2 or 3 graves. Unpublished.

56. Vărșand–Laposhalom (Arad county)

58 graves excavated in 19449 and other graves were discovered in 1906. D. Popescu, 1956, 125–143; P. Medgyesi, 1995, 98–118.

57. Vladimirescu–Arad (Arad county)

58 graves. Unpublished.

58. Voiteni (Timiș county)

7 graves. Fl. Medeleț, D. Tănase, E. Gáll, 2001, 99–112.

59. Zalău–Palvar (Sălaj county)

11 graves. C. Cosma, 1994, 323–329; S. Băculeț-Crișan, D. Băculeț-Crișan, 2003.

60. Zalău–Ortelec (Sălaj county)

Cca. 70 graves. Unpublished.

61. Zimandinu Nou (Arad county)

Stray finds belonging to the 10th–11th centuries. Unpublished.

62. Curtuiușeni (Bihor county)

Stray finds (2 stirrups). Unpublished.

63. Sântandrei (Bihor county)

Stray finds (stirrup, bit). D. Juhas, 1978, 493–519.

64. Eresteghin–Zádogostető (Covasna county)

Stray finds (lance, stirrup). Gy. László, 1943, 82, tb. XV/3–4.

Vizejdia (Timiș county)

Single grave? Unpublished.

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