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ATYPICAL BURIALS FROM THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES IN THE TERRITORY OF WESTERN SLOVAKIA [1]

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The change in the burial rite in the Early Middle Ages brought new problems in the interpretation of burials. Within the regular graves, with individuals placed in stretched supine position with the head towards the west, occurred also those who defy this rule. They are mainly the graves found outside the cemeteries (isolated graves, graves at settlement, individuals laid in settlement features) and graves of individuals buried at cemeteries but in atypical positions (individuals in prone, lateral, or other rare positions) or orientation (north-southern directions of a grave pit or with the head laid towards the east), eventually the graves with identified posterior interventions. These atypical graves gain the attention of European scientists, who try to interpret them, in the last few years. The paper concentrates on these graves from the territory of western Slovakia from the period of the 9th to 12th c. and tries to contribute to the understanding of this problem.

Keywords: Western Slovakia, Early Middle Ages, burial rite, atypical grave, body position, grave orientation.

INTRODUCTION

In the Early Middle Ages, there was a widespread change in the burial ritual in Central Europe. In the territories where cremation was previously performed, the burial rite changed to the inhumation rite. The changes and the reasons that may have led to this move have been addressed by several scholars (summarized in *Štefan 2009*; *Ungerman 2006*). In the lowland areas of western Slovakia (in the area of the Danube Lowlands)[2], inhumation burials were found mainly in so-called flat burial grounds. The dead were placed in the burial pits with their heads turned to the west and their feet to the east. They were placed in an extended position on their backs with their arms along their bodies and their legs outstretched. This position was typical throughout early medieval Europe (*Unger 2006*, 43). However, in the European area as a whole, in addition to these graves, which make up the majority of those buried, some graves differ from this typical burial mode. In the past, many of these deviations have been attributed to anti-vampiric measures or fear of the undead (*Aspöck 2008*, 21; *Hanuliak 1998*; *Krumphanzlová 1961*; *1964*). In other languages, these graves tend to be referred to as deviant (in English the term deviant is common, in German *sonder*), with the English term, in particular, having negative connotations. In Slovakia, in addition to a comprehensive study of the funerary rite, these graves were studied by *M. Hanuliak* (e.g. *1994*; *1997*; *1998*; *1999*), who, however, did not cover these graves with a special category, but rather dealt with particular anomalies within the funerary rite. Based on suggestions by other scholars (*Aspöck 2008*, 29; *Gardeła 2017*), it is inclined to label these graves as atypical, as they fall outside the description mentioned in the first paragraph in one or more characteristics.

The flat burial grounds cease to exist in the 12th c. when the burials definitely move to the churchyards (*Unger 2006*, 59). The number of atypical graves rapidly decreases in these cemeteries, and different burial customs can be observed here. That is the reason why this paper focuses on the period from the 9th to the 12th c.

Atypical graves or atypical burials can be divided into two basic groups. The first consists of individuals found outside of contemporary burial sites – they may not even be buried in grave pits, but in features with a different function originally. This group includes isolated graves and graves in settlements.

The second group includes individuals who, although found in regular burial sites, position or orientation of their body is out of the prevailing one. Individuals laid in lateral or in the prone position laid in north-south or east-west directions, and individuals

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[2] The area of region Záhorie was not included in the paper. Cemeteries in its territory were found mainly in its northern part, which belonged rather to the Moravian part of Great Moravia as an economic background of Mikulčice (*Hladík 2014*, 53–56).

on which posterior interventions have been observed belong to this group. In the study, it is these two groups and the possible reasons for such deposition that will be addressed.

INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE CEMETERIES

Isolated graves

Isolated graves appeared continuously in the past, not only in the Early Middle Ages. Ideally, an isolated grave can be classified as one in which the individual found has been dated to the period under investigation, with no other contemporaneous finds in the vicinity. According to the publication of *M. Hanuliak* (*2004*, 37), 44 finds have been identified in this way in Slovakia. However, the author also included findings that do not fall within the criteria outlined in this category. There are sites where artefacts only probably coming from the grave were found. He also included finds from the centre of Bratislava and Nitra in this category. Given the extensive and intensive building activity in the cities, it is more likely that the graves were part of a settlement or burial site that archaeologists have been unable to capture. The decision has also been made not to consider graves that have been dated to the Early Medieval period based solely on the orientation and position of the buried person, as it can be believed that this does not prove conclusively that the deceased was buried in this period. Thus, the number of isolated graves is reduced to 15. According to the map (Fig. 1; Table 1), the graves are distributed in the peripheral areas of the Danube Plain but their distribution partly overlaps with other sites with anomalous graves and not only with them (for comparison *Hanuliak 2004*, fig. 37). In the area of Žitný ostrov, Early Medieval sites are less numerous. The reasons for this phenomenon are beyond the scope of this paper.

Also, anthropological analysis has not been carried out for most of the graves. Sex was determined for only five individuals. One individual was identified as a child and one as a juvenile. An elderly woman was supposed to have been found at Želiezovce, a location near the major (*Mitscha-Märheim/Pittioni 1934*, 165), but it is not clear whether the sex was determined by an anthropologist or only based on the inventory, which consisted of three earrings and one vessel. Males have been found at Chotín at three sites separated from each other by a large distance (*Nevizánsky 1978b*) and at Kamenín (*Nevizánsky 1980*). Two of the men were of *adultus* age, two of *maturus* age. A knife, an axe, and a bucket fitting were found in the graves of the identified men in the Chotín grave from the Káptalan site, and four arrowheads were found in the Chotín grave, location near the house 144, respectively (*Nevizánsky 1978b*). The man's grave from Chotín-Kenderláb site did not have any inventory with him. Also interesting is a double grave from Kamenín in which a man with a child aged one and a half to two years was interred, and the man carried two spurs, an axe, and pottery (*Nevizánsky 1980*). An axe was also found in a grave at Dvorníky (*Bialeková zost. 1989*, 438). Otherwise, mostly vessels were found in the graves, in two cases there was jewellery. Depth was specified in only two cases. The orientation of the individuals was predominantly in the W – E direction, sometimes with small deviations. In two cases, the skeletal remains were deposited in the S – N or NNE – SSW direction. The position of a body in the graves was often not indicated – if indicated, the individuals were in a stretched position.

We can also rely on written sources to interpret these graves. However, these are not directly related to the territory in question or to the phenomenon we are studying. One of the hypotheses that have been suggested is that the people buried in this way were persons who died in a place far from home, or they may have been strangers who did not fully integrate into the community. Also, in the codices of Břetislav I the prohibition of burying the dead in fields or forests is mentioned, indicating that this type of burial was widespread (*Unger 2006*, 55). Outside cemeteries, people who died in sin, or suicide, and those who died in hunting or tournaments were to be buried. In the 16th c., Protestants in Catholic land, witches, or dead as the result of magical practices may have been buried outside the cemetery. Murder victims and illegitimate children were also interred outside the burial ground (*Unger 2006*, 144, 145). Execution in the Middle Ages did not necessarily mean that an individual was buried elsewhere than in a consecrated area. Criminals have mostly been buried outside the cemetery since the Late Middle Ages (*Mašková 2009*, 79). Suicides may also have been buried outside the boundaries of the area designated for interment (*Unger 2006*, 163). These interpretations are however concentrated on areas where Christianity and churchyards were more firmly established than in the Early Middle Ages in Slovakia.

The territory of Hungary was regulated by the law codes of Ladislaus and Coloman, which were written at the end of the 11th and at the beginning of the 12th c. In the *Code of St. Ladislaus*, the punishment for those who do not bury the dead near the church is to repent for twelve days on bread and water (*Závodszky 1904*, 75). Also, the mayor who does not bury the body of a poor guest or villager, and the

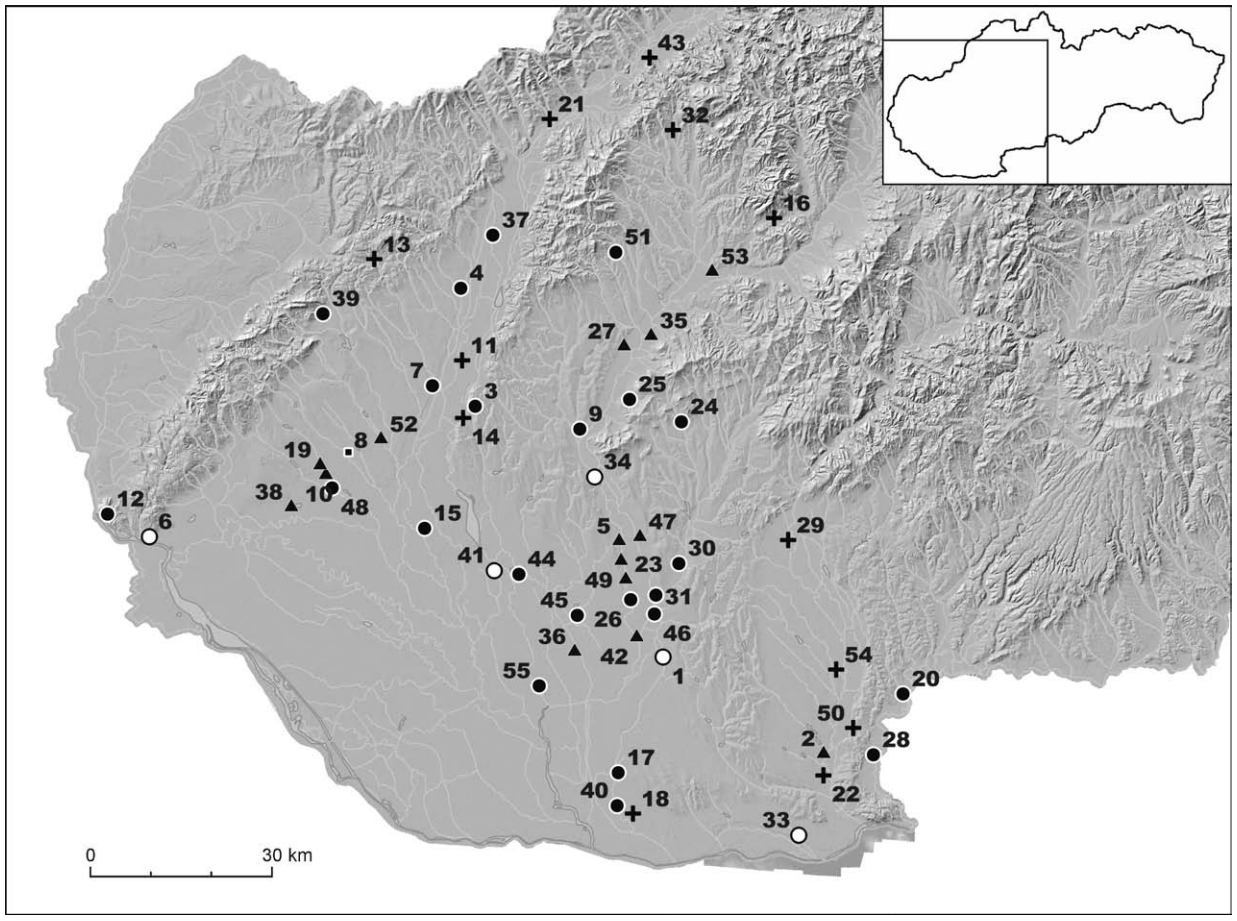


Fig. 1. Map with sites where atypically buried individuals were found (the numbers of sites correspond with the numbers in the table of sites). Legend: ● – cemetery; ▲ – settlement + isolated grave; ○ – cemetery/settlement; ■ – cemetery/isolated grave.

master the remains of a servant, are to repent. There is a law in the later code of King Coloman which states that burials of Christians are not to take place elsewhere than in atriums, the courts of churches (*Závodszky 1904*, 192). These laws may point to the common practice of burials outside churches and thus to the existence of solitary graves. However, it may rather address the problem of the persistence of burial grounds without churches.

Natural scientific methods could also influence the number of graves categorized in this way. By comparison, in England, it is thanks to radiocarbon dating that several finds have recently been reassessed with the conclusion that the majority of graves fall within the Anglo-Saxon period, i.e. the 7th to 11th c. (*Reynolds 2009*, 209–218). Moreover, the location of these graves confirms that these graves were often located on the boundaries of two administrative units (hundreds). A few individuals have also been discovered along old roadways. In London, graves of women have also been found on the banks of the Thames who may have been victims of judicial drowning (*Reynolds 2009*, 210).

Weapons found in the graves of younger men in southern Slovakia could indicate possible victims of the conflict buried far from home. The fact that the individuals were buried in a stretched position and mostly in a standard orientation does not indicate that those who buried them tried to treat them differently, it is just that even though they found themselves 'alone' without the presence of their own, their family, their community, those who buried them were perhaps trying to make sure that they rested in peace despite this (unless of course there was a crossroads or border at the site that we do not know about now). Even if the isolated graves do not provide enough information to interpret them satisfactorily, it is necessary to draw attention to this phenomenon. As they form part of the contemporary burial ritual, they must be treated with the hope that in the future methods will be applied which will give more information to new finds, or perhaps at least the analysis of older finds will be performed. If for nothing else, they should be taken note of for the reason that they may indicate the presence of other graves or settlements and thus draw attention to new sites.

Table 1. The list of sites with atypically buried individuals. Legend: A – number of site on map; B – site; C – location; D – district; E – years of research; F – type of site (c – cemetery; s – settlement; ig – isolated grave); G – number of graves/features; H – prone position; I – plate number; J – lateral position; K – plate number; L – lateral position on left side; M – lateral position on right side; N – orientation of skeleton; O – plate number; P – E – W and adjacent directions; R – N – S, S – N and adjacent directions; S – posterior interventions; T – plate number; U – grave in the settlement area; V – individuals in the settlement features; X – dating/centuries; Y – bibliography.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	X	Y
1a	Bešeňov	Malomgát	NZ	1956	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	2	10th–11th	*Bialeková 1958*
1b	Bešeňov	Papföld	NZ	1949–1950	c	131	0	–	3	–	1	2	2	–	2	0	20	–	–	–	second half of 10th–half of 12th	*Kraskovská 1958*
1c	Bešeňov	Papföld	NZ	1942	c	73	0	–	0	–	1	0	12	–	12	0	17	–	–	–	half of 11th–half of 12th	*Szőke/Nemeskéri 1954*
1d	Bešeňov	Sírdűlő/ Sírvölgy	NZ	1974–1976	c	134	0	–	3	II: 4; III: 1, 2	0	3	0	–	0	0	18	X: 3, 4; XI: 1	–	–	end of 9th–end of 10th	*Hanuliak 1977; Nevizánsky 1975; 1978a; 1979*
2a	Bíňa	Park	NZ	1994	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	early middle ages	*Prášek 1996*
2b	Bíňa	–	NZ	1962–1963	s	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	2	9th–12th	*Habovštiak 1966*
3	Bojničky	Cintorínske pole	HC	1967	c	24	0	–	1	–	1	0	2	–	2	0	2	–	–	–	first–second third of 9th	*Bialeková 1993a*
4	Borovce	–	PN	1986–2010	c	447	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8th–12th	*Staššíková-Štukovská 1986; Šefčáková et al. 2015*
5	Branč	Helyföldek	NR	1961–1962	s	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	0	second half of 9th–beginning of 10th	*Vladár 1964*
6a	Bratislava--Karlova Ves	Botanická záhrada	BA	1954	c	20	0	–	1	–	1	0	0	–	0	0	1	–	–	–	9th–first half of 10th	*Kraskovská 1955*
6b	Bratislava--Staré Mesto	Beblavého ul.	BA	1968–1971	s	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0	9th–first half of 10th	*Polla/Vallašek 1991*
6c	Bratislava--Staré Mesto	Panská ul. 16	BA	1990	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	3	second half of 9th–half of 10th	*Lesák/Musilová 1999*
6d	Bratislava--Staré Mesto	Panská ul. 19–21, parcela 300	BA	1984	c	4	0	–	1	–	0	1	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	second half of 9th–half of 10th	*Lesák/Musilová 1999*
6e	Bratislava--Staré Mesto	Uršulínska ul. parcela 62	BA	1995	c	4	0	–	1	–	1	0	3	–	2	1	1	–	–	–	second half of 9th–half of 10th	*Lesák/Musilová 1999*
6f	Bratislava--Staré Mesto	Ventúrska ul. 3–5	BA	1967	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	7	second half of 9th–half of 10th	*Vallašek 1972*
7	Bučany	Vinohrady	TT	1986	c	94	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	10	–	–	–	10th	*Hanuliak 1993*
8a	Cífer-Pác	Diaľnica	TT	1976	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Zábojník 1976; 1985*
8b	Cífer-Pác	Drahy	TT	1974–1976	c	40	0	–	5	III: 3–6	1	4	3	–	2	1	0	–	0	7	10th	*Zábojník 1976; 1985*
9	Čakajovce	Kostolné	NR	1974, 1976–1986	c	805	0	–	6	IV: 1–5	3	3	36	IX: 1–3	28	8	29	XI: 2–4	–	–	9th–12th	*Rejholcová 1974; 1977; 1978a; 1978b; 1979b, 1980; 1981; 1983a; 1983b; 1986; 1995a; 1995b*
10	Čataj	Nad korytom	SC	1976	s	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	0	9th	*Ožďáni 1977*
11	Červeník	Pozemok domu 88	HC	1976	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th	*Pastorek 1977*

Table 1. Continuation.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	X	Y
12a	Devín	Staré vinohrady	BA	1952	c	26	0	–	0	–	0	0	11	–	9	2	4	–	–	–	second half of 9th	*Kraskovská 1953*
12b	Devín	Za kostolom	BA	1967–1971	c	123	3	–	11	–	5	6	24	–	22	2	5	–	–	–	9th–first half of 10th	*Plachá/Hlavicová/Keller 1990*
13	Dobrá Voda	Pozemok domu J. Damiána	TT	1960	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th	*Bialeková zost. 1989; Hanuliak 2004*
14	Dvorníky-Posádka	Pozemok A. Majku	HC	1964	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th	*Bialeková zost. 1989; Hanuliak 2004*
15	Galanta-Hody	Duna II	TT	1982–1983	c	16	0	–	0	–	0	0	4	–	2	2	4	–	–	–	9th	*Hanuliak/Ižóf 2002; Ižóf 1984*
16	Horné Vestenice	Hôrka	PD	1941	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th–11th	*Bialeková zost. 1992*
17	Hurbanovo	Pieskovisko	KN	1956	c	75	0	–	2	IV: 6	0	2	0	–	0	0	1	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Točík 1971*
18a	Chotín	Dom č. 144	KN	1977	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th–11th	*Nevizánsky 1978b*
18b	Chotín	Káptalan	KN	1977	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th	*Nevizánsky 1978b*
18c	Chotín	Kenderláb	KN	1977	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	8th–9th	*Nevizánsky 1978b*
19	Igram	Trasa plynovodu	SC	1976	s	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0	9th	*Ožďáni 1977*
20	Ipeľský Sokolec	rozhranie polôh Zsamba dülő a Mogyorós	LV	1961	c	10	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	3	–	–	–	9th	*Vendtová/Rejholec 1963*
21	Ivanovce	Skala	TN	1946	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th	*Bialeková zost. 1989; Hanuliak 2004*
22	Kamenín	Kiskukoricás	NZ	1978	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	early middle ages	*Nevizánsky 1980*
23a	Komjatice	Kňazova jama	NZ	1979	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	2	11th–12th	*Hanuliak 1997*
23b	Komjatice	Štrkovisko	NZ	1983	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	11th–12th	*Hanuliak 1997*
24	Ladice	Dvor JRD	ZM	1960	c	4	0	–	0	–	0	0	1	–	1	0	0	–	–	–	second half of 9th–beginning of 10th	*Vendtová 1962*
25	Lefantovce	Dolné Konopnisko	NR	1987	c	12	0	–	1	V: 1	0	1	2	–	1	1	0	–	–	–	second half of 9th	*Rejholcová 1988; 1989; 1992*
26	Lipová-Ondrochov	Tallószer	NZ	1953	c	68	0	–	0	–	0	0	5	–	3	2	16	XI: 5, 6; XII: 1	–	–	9th–10th	*Rejholcová 1958; Točík 1971*
27	Ludanice	Agrolet	TO	1977	s	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0	9th–10th	*Wiedermann 1985*
28	Malé Kosihy	Horné Konopnice	NZ	1985–1986	c	434	1	I: 2	1	V: 2	1	0	1	–	0	1	13	XII: 2	0	1	10th–11th	*Hanuliak 1986; 1994*
29	Marušová	JRD	LV	1955	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	1	–	0	1	0	–	–	–	end of 8th–first half of 9th	*Bialeková 1961*

Table 1. Continuation.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	X	Y
30	Michal nad Žitavou	Domovina	NZ	1956	c	32	0	–	0	–	0	0	4	–	2	2	4	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Točík 1971*
31	Mojzesovo	Pozemok domu 106	NZ	1969	c	2	0	–	0	–	0	0	1	–	1	0	0	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Béreš 1977*
32	Motešice- -Horné Motešice	–	TN	1944	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Bialeková 1961*
33a	Mužla-Čenkov	Orechový sad	NZ	1985–1986, 1989, 1992	s	45+1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	9	1	9th–12th	*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*
33b	Mužla-Čenkov	Vilmakert	NZ	1980–1990, 1996	s+c	54+8	2	–	5	–	1	4	10	–	5	5	7	–	32	11	9th–12th	*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015; Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*
34a	Nitra	Lupka	NR	1959	c	92	0	–	3	V: 3–5	1	2	4	–	3	1	22	XII: 3–6	–	–	9th	*Chropovský 1962; 1968*
34b	Nitra- -Dolné Krškany	Nábytkáreň	NR	1976, 1979	c	54	0	–	0	–	0	0	2	–	1	1	2	–	–	–	9th	*Chropovský 1979; Hanuliak/Chropovský 2019b*
34c	Nitra-Chrenová	Baumax-Shell	NR	1996. 1999	c	7	0	–	0	–	0	0	6	–	6	0	0	–	0	0	9th	*Březinová a kol. 2003*
34d	Nitra-Chrenová	Selenec II	NR	2010	c	64	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	12	–	–	–	10th–11th	*Daňová 2013; Daňová/Ruttkay 2011*
34e	Nitra- -Horné Krškany	Mäsokombinát	NR	1964, 1967	c	101	0	–	1	V: 6	0	1	0	–	0	0	2	–	–	–	10th–11th	*Chropovský 1979; Hanuliak/Chropovský 2019a*
34f	Nitra-Chrenová	Športový areál	NR	1984	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0	end of 9th–beginning of 10th	*Chropovský/Fusek 1988*
34g	Nitra- -Martinský vrch	Kasárne pod Zoborom	NR	1992	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0	early middle ages	*Březinová 1993*
34h	Nitra- -Staré mesto	Farská ul. 14	NR	1954	s	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	2	9th	*Hanuliak 1997*
34i	Nitra- -Staré mesto	Farská ul. 9	NR	1956	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0	9th	*Bialeková zost. 1989*
34j	Nitra- -Staré mesto	Tržnica	NR	2000–2001	s+c	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	10	9th	*Bednár/Fottová 2003; Jakab 2003*
34k	Nitra- -Staré mesto	Západný svah hradného kopca	NR	1995	c	3	0	–	0	–	0	0	3	–	0	3	0	–	–	–	second half of 9th–10th	*Bednár 1997*
34l	Nitra-Janíkovce	Dolná ul. 15	NR	1978	c	6	0	–	1	–	0	1	1	–	0	1	0	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Hanuliak 1995*
34m	Nitra-Zobor	Dolnozoborská cesta	NR	1973	c	52	1	I: 1	4	VI: 1–4	0	4	9	IX: 4	4	5	4	XII: 7	–	–	9th–10th	*Chropovský 1974; 1978*
34n	Nitra-Zobor	Pod Zoborom	NR	1951	c	165	0	–	1	–	0	1	1	–	1	0	3	–	–	–	second half of 10th–beginning of 11th	*Čaplovič 1954*
35	Nitrianska Streda	Patriková	TO	1966	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	9th	*Hanuliak 1997*

Table 1. Continuation.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	X	Y
36	Palárikovo	Dolný kresztúr	NZ	1974	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	4	12th–13th	*Hanuliak 1997*
37	Pobedim	Na Laze	NM	1961–1971	c	162	1	I: 3	3	VI: 5, 6; VII: 1, 2	1	2	20	–	12	8	108	–	–	–	last third of 9th–half of 10th	*Bialeková 1993a; Vendtová 1966; 1969*
38	Senec	Pasienok	SC	1977	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	11th–12th	*Hanuliak 1997*
39	Smolenice	Záhumenice	TT	1972–1973	c	43	0	–	0	–	0	0	1	–	1	0	0	–	–	–	second half of 9th–beginning of 10th	*Dušek 1979*
40	Svätý Peter	Malé lúky/ Kisrét	KN	1959–1960	c	68	0	–	1	–	0	1	3	–	3	0	3	–	–	–	second half of 9th–first quarter of 10th	*Zábojník 1976; 1985*
41a	Šaľa-Veča	Hídas	SA	1964–1965	s	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	4	10th–11th	*Točík 1992*
41b	Šaľa-Veča	Pieskovisko	SA	1957	c	23	0	–	1	–	1	0	2	–	2	0	1	–	–	–	second half of 9th–beginning of 10th	*Točík 1992*
42	Šurany-Nitriansky Hrádok	Vysoký breh	NZ	1955	s	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	0	9th	*Bialeková 1958; 1959*
43	Trenčianska Teplá	Pozemok domu 223	TN	1960	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th	*Bialeková zost. 1989; Hanuliak 2004*
44	Trnovec nad Váhom-Horný Jatov	Remíza	SA	1951–1954	c	528	4	I: 4; II:1–3	12	VII: 3–9; VIII	3	8	24	–	22	2	44	XIII: 1–3	–	–	9th–11th	*Rajček 1955; Točík 1971*
45a	Tvrdošovce	Halomi domb	NZ	1975	c	24	1	–	1	–	1	0	5	–	1	4	13	–	–	–	second half of 9th	*Kraskovská/Paulík 1978*
45b	Tvrdošovce	Kekrektó	NZ	1960	c	24	0	–	0	–	0	0	1	–	0	1	0	–	–	–	second half of 9th	*Točík 1971*
46	Úľany nad Žitavou	Agač	NZ	1962	c	38	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	3	–	–	–	9th–11th	*Liptáková 1963*
47	Veľký Cetín	Jakubská B	NR	1991	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	3	early middle ages	*Hanuliak 1997; Cheben/Ruttkayová/Ruttkay 1994*
48	Veľký Grob	Za potoky	GA	1951	c	143	0	–	0	–	0	0	14	X: 1, 2	7	7	26	XIII: 4–6	–	–	9th	*Chropovský 1955; 1957; Kraskovská 1950*
49	Veľký Kýr	Násypový sek	NZ	1997	s	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	1	9th–10th	*Kuzma 2000; Kuzma/Rajtár/ Tirpák 1999*
50	Zalaba	Libadomb	LV	1934	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Eisner 1937*
51	Závada	Chríby	TO	1974, 1976	c	36	1	–	0	–	0	0	5	–	2	3	9	–	–	–	9th	*Bialeková 1982*
52	Zeleneč	Pri potoku	TT	1976	s	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	2	11th–12th	*Hanuliak 1997*
53	Žabokreky nad Nitrou	Hlinisko	PE	1961	s	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	9th	*Hanuliak 1997*
54	Želiezovce	Pri majeri	LV	1931	ig	1	0	–	0	–	0	0	1	–	0	1	0	–	–	–	9th–10th	*Mitscha-Märheim/Pittioni 1934*
55	Zemné	osada Gúg	NZ	1979	c	66	0	–	1	–	0	1	–	–	0	0	0	–	–	–	–	*Rejholcová 1979a*

Individuals on the settlement

Finds of skeletons in the settlement are quite frequent. Individuals from this group can be divided into two subgroups, depending on the type of feature they were found in. The first group consists of the dead buried in the settlement but in a regular grave pit. The second group is made up of individuals found in settlement features. In Moravia, a category of individuals found in settlement layers was singled out by *Š. Krupičková* (*2010*), but such a case has not been documented in Slovakia yet.

Graves in the settlement area

In the settlements, in addition to the features that were originally used for housing or economic purposes, we also find those for which this purpose cannot be assumed. They are approximately the size of the human body and contain human skeletons. We can therefore reasonably conclude that their primary function was funerary – they were burial pits. In Slovakia, 66 graves have been documented in this way at 11 sites (Branč, Čataj, Igram, Ludanice, Mužla-Čenkov-Orechový sad, Mužla-Čenkov-Vilmakert, Nitra-Chrenová, Nitra-Martinský Vrch, Nitra-Staré mesto, Šurany-Nitriansky Hrádok and Veľký Kýr). The largest number of graves, numbering 32, was examined at the settlement in Mužla-Čenkov, site Vilmakert, making this site the most prominent representative of this category of graves. It should be mentioned that a burial site with regular graves was also investigated at the site, and individuals were also discovered in the settlement buildings. A similar situation exists at the Orechový sad site, where, in addition to the nine individuals buried in the settlement area, three cemeteries and one individual in a settlement feature were also identified. At the other sites, these numbers do not reach such high figures. As the Vilmakert and Orechový sad sites are a single settlement unit within the Mužla-Čenkov site (Orechový sad is thought to be an outpost of the Vilmakert hillfort; *Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 7), the sites in question will be evaluated together. An analogous case is or should be a castle hill in Nitra and its ;surroundings. There were also found scattered graves and individuals found in settlement features. The only thing missing is a burial ground, but this may be due to the dense development, which undoubtedly distorts the image of the settlement in Nitra.

However, several limitations are encountered in the analysis of the finds assemblage, which may significantly affect the interpretation of this phenomenon. One of them is unsatisfactory or incomplete publication. For most of the sites analysed, there is no published site plan. Therefore, it is not possible to verify where the graves were located within the settlement area. The positioning of the graves in the context of the surrounding settlement buildings could tell us something about the status (either of the buried or living relative to the deceased) or function of the part of the settlement in question.

When analysing such graves, we must also allow for the possibility that the graves may have not coincided with the settlement. First, there may have been one and after a time the other. In such a case it would be a regular burial site, not graves in a settlement. Therefore, if there was a settlement on the site first, could its remains still be visible when the location was used as a burial ground? In reverse, if it was a burial site first, did it not interfere with the community in establishing the settlement if the surviving grave mounds were still visible? After all, if there was a fear of the dead in the community, as evidenced by atypical burial locations, posterior arrangements, and such, among other things, surely potential residents would have thought twice about building their dwellings in a location where they might disturb the peace of the dead. But if the dead were being buried in the remains of the settlement, could this have had benefits we don't know about? Or were they the last inhabitants of the estate? Could they perhaps have longed to be laid to rest besides their native dwelling? Cases of burial within a settlement area have also been documented in early medieval settlements in France (*Zadora-Rio 2003*, 2), but also in neighbouring Moravia (*Krupičková 2010*, 195).

According to the published plans of some of the investigated sites, the graves within the complex were dispersed unevenly among the individual settlement buildings, i.e. they did not form clusters. The depth of the graves at the individual sites varies from 5 to 100 cm, which classifies them as very shallow to standard deep graves. Of course, research methodology plays a role here. Simply measuring the depth of a grave from either the present ground level or from the level of its discovery can make a big difference. Compared to graves from regular burials, grave pits from settlements appear to be relatively shallow (*Hanuliak 2004*, 75). However, the burials found at the Vilmakert burial site at Mužla-Čenkov, for example, were also not very deep (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 107), so the depth may have depended on the particular site. The grave pits were rectangular or trapezoidal in shape, which is typical for the period. Mostly they were not specially modified recorded grave pit adjustments were found only at the Mužla-Čenkov

site. During the excavations here, stepped modification of the walls or the bottom of the grave pit was documented, or there were mats or postholes in the grave. In one case (grave 36 at the site Orechový sad) the pit was lined with wood (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 155).

The usual way of burial orientation of the dead in the Early Middle Ages was in the west-east direction. Individuals in graves in the settlements also usually had a standard orientation in the west-east direction, or in deviations towards the southwest and northwest, which in this case accounts for 44 burials. However, in this case, too, burials in a different, odd, orientation were documented during the excavations. Individuals were buried in north-south directions in six cases (Čataj, grave 3; *Ožďáni 1977*, 213; Mužla-Čenkov, graves 1, 12, 25; *Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 153; *Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*, 37, 38; Nitra-Chrenová, grave 1/84; *Chropovský/Fusek 1988*, 155; Veľký Kýr, grave 3; *Kuzma/Rajtár/Tirpák 1999*, 100). In four cases burials were recorded in the opposite orientation, i.e. in the east-west direction (Čataj, graves 1, 2 and 4; *Ožďáni 1977*, 213; Šurany-Nitriansky Hrádok, grave 2/55; *Bialeková 1959*, 445).

Most often a single individual was buried in the grave. Of these, 14 were adults, 27 were children, and only three were under two years of age. There were five women and nine men. Most individuals were buried in the standard position for the period, i.e. stretched out on their backs. Only two individuals were placed on their side. In four cases, double graves were found (graves 6, 17, 36 and 39 from Mužla-Čenkov; *Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 152, 155; *Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*, 37). Children were buried in two double graves, no. 6 and 17, and an adult and a child in the other two, namely a woman and a five-year-old child in the case of grave 39, and a man and a nine- to a ten-year-old child in the other grave, no. 36.

35 graves, slightly more than half of them, had equipment. The composition of the inventory varied from a single relatively common item, such as a knife or vessel, to relatively rich and numerous grave attachments. At the Mužla-Čenkov site, Vilmakert location, a spur, a buckle, an eyelet loop, the end of a clamping belt, and an awl were found in grave 11, belonging to a man (*Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*, 155). At the settlement in Veľký Kýr, an individual had two knives, a flint, a folding knife, a bucket, and an axe attached to a grave 5 (*Kuzma 2000*, 119).

According to the information gathered, the graves found within the settlements do not show differences from those excavated for individuals on the regular burial site. It is therefore questionable what led the community to make such a choice of the final resting place, especially if we know that there were contemporary burial sites nearby at the time. Their equipment, location, orientation, and lack of posterior arrangements in most cases do not suggest that there was a reason for these individuals to be buried outside of the established space.

J. Unger (*2010*, 166) provides an interesting interpretation of the phenomenon of burying the dead in settlement areas. In his view, the adoption of Christianity is also manifested by the transfer of burial sites to the intramural area, not only near churches but also near courtyards. These processes have been documented in Germany. A similar situation may have occurred at the site of Břeclav-Pohansko, where scattered groups and isolated graves within a functioning settlement were to be used to bury mainly people who had already broken away from the patrilineal community and integrated into the structures of the new state. An analogous explanation can also be applied in the case of Mužla-Čenkov and Nitra-Staré mesto. *J. Unger* (*2010*, 167) offers other explanations for this phenomenon. For the decision of the survivors to bury the deceased within the settlement area, the society-wide situation may have played a role. People may have been buried in this way during times of wartime conflict. If the inhabitants of the locality were threatened by potential troops, it may have been that burial in the usual place was made impossible because of the imminent danger. Burial in the settlement area would have been a provisional crisis solution. This is especially true for graves located on the grounds of fortified settlements – an open settlement would have had difficulty withstanding an attack by the army.

As far as the Mužla-Čenkov and Nitra-Staré mesto are concerned, the situation is similar at the Moravian site of Břeclav-Pohansko. Here, graves are also found in smaller or larger groups or isolated within settlements, but in addition, two church cemeteries have been discovered here (*Přichystalová 2018*, 47). The author suggests that while burials in the church cemeteries must have been centrally controlled and planned, there is more variation in the other graves within the complex, which was due to the less homogeneous religious, social, and perhaps ethnic background of those buried. This was also reflected in the non-centralized arrangement of the burial complexes (*Přichystalová 2018*, 60). It may also have been the case at the fortified settlement of Mužla-Čenkov, whose greater distance from central sites and position on the periphery of the empire may have reinforced this diversity.

Individuals found in settlement features

Compared to the standard graves dating to the Early Medieval period, here we encounter a diverse group of buried individuals who differ not only in that they were deposited in a feature with an originally different function but also in that their position and orientation do not correspond to contemporary practices. In this respect, the individuals found in the settlement features form a considerably heterogeneous group, in which it is difficult to find common traits that would unite them. In the researched area, 65 individuals have so far been documented in settlement features of 21 localities (Fig. 1). It is also questionable whether the burial of these individuals can be considered at all as a form of burial, or whether they can be classified as buried individuals since the treatment of these bodies often shows indifference to the point of contempt for the remains.

Individuals were deposited in various types of settlement features. Storage pits dominated, either pear-shaped (7 cases) or cylindrical in cross-section (8 cases). There were also cases in which the deceased were buried in features with a residential function (Palárikovo; *Hanuliak 1997,* 163). Human skeletons have also been found in a well-shaped pit (Bratislava-Ventúrska ulica; *Vallašek 1972*, 246). Some of the features were used for burials shortly after their primary function ended, others were already partially filled and did not execute their original function for a longer period.

As with the graves in the settlements, we cannot say for certain why individuals were buried in this form when there were standard graves in the immediate vicinity. It does, however, speak to their unusual position within the community. It is interesting to note that some individuals were found in features near the cemeteries, or directly in their area of them. This is the case at the Cífer-Pác site, where feature 4/7 was located between two groups of graves and feature 32 directly in a smaller group together with three graves (*Zábojník 1985*, fig. 2). However, the dating of the entire burial site is questionable. As the author of the research, J. Zábojník, has commented, the graves show considerable differences. Some of them may have been dug as early as in the Bronze Age, others have been dated to the 8th c., and others to the 9th or early 10th c. (*Zábojník 1985*, 215). Since the burial site has not been completely excavated, it is with difficulty that we can pronounce definitive conclusions. At Mužla-Čenkov, at the Orechový sad site, which formed the outpost of the hillfort, only one case of the burial of a corpse in a settlement structure has been recorded. In a storage pit of cylindrical cross-section, a child was found dead at the age of 1 to 1.5 years (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 279). In this case, it is possible to think about the deposition of an individual not yet accepted into the community.

In 24 cases at 20 sites, only one human skeleton was discovered in a settlement feature. Multiple individuals were found in 11 features at 10 sites. The highest number of individuals, nine, was recorded at Nitra-Tržnica (*Bednár/Fottová 2003*). Seven individuals were found in Bratislava on Ventúrska ulica (*Vallašek 1972*), in a feature that probably previously served as a well. At two localities, four individuals were documented in one feature (Cífer-Pác-Drahy, Palárikovo). Of these, each time it was a different type of feature. At Cífer-Pác it was a pear-shaped storage pit (*Zábojník 1985*, 208) and at Palárikovo a pit-house (*Hanuliak 1997,* 163). Three individuals each were recorded in features at three sites (Bratislava-Staré Mesto-Panská ulica 16; *Lesák/Musilová 1999*, 55; Cífer-Pác-Drahy; *Zábojník 1985*, 208; Veľký Cetín; *Cheben/Ruttkayová/Ruttkay 1994*, 202). Also, at three localities one feature with two individuals in it was examined (Komjatice; *Hanuliak 1997*, 159; Mužla-Čenkov-Vilmakert; *Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 157; Zeleneč; *Hanuliak 1997,* 166). In Cífer-Pác, several individuals were found in two pits, but it was not possible to determine whether they were buried together or with a time gap. In the case that the bodies were laid in the pit at the same time, we could consider the hypothesis that the individuals succumbed to an epidemic or were affected by some other misfortune that required quick burial, and so pre-existing features could have been used. Or the survivors may have resorted to digging two large pits, rather than granting each deceased their own grave pit.

Individuals discovered in the features were buried in a wide range of positions. For this period the standard supine position was recorded in only 23 cases. If several individuals were found in a feature, the supine position was observed for all those buried in only one case, namely in feature 966 at the Mužla-Čenkov-Vilmakert fortress (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 157). Individuals were also buried on their backs in feature 27 at the Mužla-Čenkov site, the Orechový sad site, and in feature 438 at the Vilmakert site (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 157, 279; *Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*, 160). In these cases, however, the site context did not indicate a clear attempt for a standard position. They all had one of the limbs flexed and thus the respectful position was not fully observed. Their burial in a settlement feature may therefore have been related to other causes. Children were found in features 27 and 438, one aged 1–1.5 years, the

other aged 10–11 years. In feature 966 an adult female and a child in the *Infans* II age category were found. The female had her left lower limb severely bent, with the knee extending into the chest area. The child in feature 438, in turn, had both lower limbs severely flexed, resting against the wall of the lateral niche. The individual in feature 438 was lying in a WNW – SSE direction, the others were positioned in opposite E – W directions. Placement of the body on the abdomen occurred four times, on the left side 13 times, on the right side 10 times, and four times the individuals were in a semi-sitting position. The position could not be ascertained in 11 cases, either because the bones were scattered, the position of the skeleton was not indicated, or only some bones were found.

Individuals were buried in different orientations within the settlement. The respectful position of individuals can be traced at the site in Bíňa, where two individuals were found in a stretched supine position and buried in a west-east direction (*Habovštiak 1966*, 454, 463). One of them, however, was deposited in a regular grave pit, which was located in the area of an older dwelling. In addition, there were two other graves nearby, which could indicate that a burial ground was later established at the site. In the second case from Bíňa, it is a grave dug in the backfill of a rampart. It was situated under the building, so it probably does not count as the situation we are looking for. In the other settlement features, even if the individuals were deposited in the 'correct direction', they rested in a particular position.

Skeletal remains of children in settlement features have been recorded in four cases (Mužla-Čenkov-Orechový sad site, feature 27; *Hanuliak 1997*, 161; Mužla-Čenkov-Vilmakert site, features 438 and 966; *Hanuliak 1997*, 161; Veľký Cetín-Jakubská B, feature 2; *Cheben/Ruttkayová/Ruttkay 1994*, 202), of which twice they were buried together with an adult (features 966 from Mužla-Čenkov and two from Veľký Cetín). Of the adults, males predominated – 21 were discovered, compared to 16 females. For ten adults it was not possible to specify their ages more precisely. One individual was classified as a subadult. Nine individuals died between the ages of 20 and 40, and there was one deceased between the ages of *adultus* and *maturus* (20–40 and 40–60). There were eight individuals in the *maturus* age group. Two individuals were of *senilis* age, i.e. over 60 years. For 24 skeletons the age could not be determined. A more detailed anthropological analysis is missing in most cases.

No inventory was found for most of the skeletons deposited in early medieval settlement features. If artefacts were discovered, they were found in the backfill of the pit and thus were probably not part of the grave goods. Quite often animal bones were also found in the features. These were directly on the bodies of two individuals uncovered in Bratislava-Ventúrska Street 3–5 (*Vallašek 1972*, 230, 231) or Cífer-Pác-Drahy (*Zábojník 1985*, 208). A vessel close to a human skeleton was discovered at the settlements of Bíňa, feature 3/62 (*Habovštiak 1966*, 454); Mužla-Čenkov-Vilmakert, feature 336 (*Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*, 28); Nitra-Staré Mesto, Farská ulica 14, feature 1 (*Hanuliak 1997*, 161); and Nitrianska Streda, feature 1 (*Hanuliak 1997*, 163). The individual at Bíňa, location Park, was carrying a small copper ornament (*Prášek 1996*, 142), and at Šaľa-Veča, location Hidas, pit 15, it was carrying two spindle whorls and a knife (*Točík 1992*, 205, 206).

As varied as the settlement features and the individuals within them are, the reasons for depositing these individuals in unusual contexts may have had different motivations. Several of these may likely have been joined in a single case. It is therefore necessary to examine each case individually and then attempt to interpret it. The state of publication of the features also matters a great deal in this respect, since without proper information it is impossible to formulate satisfactory conclusions. It also makes a difference whether the bodies were thrown into the feature at the same time or whether they were put in at intervals, but this could not be ascertained for most of the features.

One early medieval written source also mentions the throwing of a corpse into a settlement feature. In the *Czech Chronicle of Kosmas*, the murder of Božej and Bořut of the Vršovci family in Libice in 1108 is described: *'Božej ve vsi Libici, o svém osudu, žel, nic netušil. Zatímco se synem a manželkou právě sedal k obědu, přistoupil k němu chlapec a pravil: 'Pohleď, pane, na ten lidský dav, který se sem ve velikém zmatku žene přes pole.' Ale on odvětil: 'Vracejí se z boje, ať přijdou s Božím požehnáním.' Ještě ani nedomluvil, když tu hle, divoký Krása otevře dveře a zableskne vytaseným mečem a zvolá: 'Pryč s tebou, zlosyne, pryč, ty ničemo, který jsi v postní čas mého příbuzného Tomáše bez příčiny zabil.' I vstal jeho syn Borut se slovy: 'Co činíte, bratři? Je-li nařízeno, abychom byli zajati, můžeme být zajati bez zbraní a bez hluku.' A vtom již mu, aniž co tušil, vrazili meč do břicha až po jílec. A v té chvíli i zbrocený ještě krví synovou meč byl do hrdla otcova vražen. A ti útočníci, jako dobyvatelé hradů, rozebrali si nesmírné poklady, a jak praví Cato, nazmar zakrátko přišlo, co získáno za dlouhou dobu. Neboť z takového bohatství nezbyl ani kousek látky, aby jí byla pokryta jejich těla, nýbrž bez rakve a bez pohřbu byli dne 27. října Božej a jeho syn Borut jako hovada nazí vhozeni do jámy...'* (*Kosmas 2011*,

166, 167).[3] In this case, Božej and his son Bořut were thrown into the pit as part of the power struggles that took place in the early medieval kingdom. The main reason for such an action was to dehumanize the remains as much as possible. Other members of the family also met an inglorious end. The chronicle mentions how *'Neboť jedni byli vedeni na tržiště a jako dobytek skoleni, jiní byli na hoře Petříně sťati, mnoho jich bylo povražděno v domech nebo na ulicích…'* (*Kosmas 2011*, 167).[4] The findings recorded in early medieval settlements were certainly not about settling scores among the upper classes. However, the form in which the skeletons are found in most cases speaks of the indifference of the survivors to the further fate of the body. It even suggests contempt or disgust for the remains. It is unlikely that a community would treat its valued member in this way – rather, it may be a kind of additional punishment. Someone who had transgressed against established rules may have been thrown into the pit.

This hypothesis, however, cannot be applied comprehensively, to all the remains found in the settlements. Certainly, young children did not commit such misdemeanours to be punished by being thrown into an unused pit, and yet we find them in such situations. A one to a one-and-a-half-year-old child was found in cylindrical storage pit 27 in Mužla-Čenkov, at the Orechový sad site (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 279). In the same settlement area, a ten- to an eleven-year-old child was discovered in cylindrical storage pit 438 with a niche, with the child's lower limbs resting in the niche (*Hanuliak/Kuzma/Šalkovský 1993*, 160).

Children's remains are often found outside the place where the community usually buried. Already in the Neolithic period, children's graves appear, which differ from those of adults (*Čermáková 2007*, 17). During the duration of the Roman Empire, children did not have the right to burial until the first teething, and infants were therefore buried under the hearth or in front of the house (*Unger 2006*, 127). In medieval burial sites, we often encounter the absence of especially the youngest children, or their proportion is smaller than it should be (*Tomková 2003*, 584). It is the lack of integration of younger children that may be the reason why some individuals were buried in settlement pits. This method may have represented an 'alternative route' to burial if they were not allowed to rest on the burial ground. Applying a highly pragmatic, unimaginative approach, depositing children's remains in a settlement pit appears to be the easiest way to dispose of them. In Bohemia, several cases have been documented in which the skeletons of the youngest children have been found in pits together with animal bones as waste after meat consumption (*Unger 2006*, 130).

The proximity of settlements with finds of human remains and regular burial sites is known from several Slovak sites. In Cífer-Pác, in the Drahy location, two cases dating back to the 10th c. have been recorded. In feature 4/7 there were three individuals buried in the prone or semi-sitting position, in feature 32 there were four individuals in the prone position (*Zábojník 1985*, 208). Anthropologically, the skeletons in the pits were determined to be individuals between the ages of *maturus* and *senilis*, of which four individuals could be identified as female and three as male. In addition to the human skeletons, a horse skull was found in feature 4/7. Unspecified animal bones were also discovered in feature 32. The pits were pear-shaped, but no traces of grain residues were found in them, both of them were, moreover, located between graves. For this reason, their settlement function is questionable.

A structure with seven men was found at 3–5 Ventúrska ulica in Bratislava, which, unlike the previous ones, is not situated near a burial site (*Vallašek 1972*). The individuals were resting in a circular pit in unnatural positions, the pit having a secondary use in this respect – originally it may have served as a well (*Vallašek 1972*, 246). A disjointed wreath of iron hrivnas was uncovered at the edges of the pit. In addition, animal bones and sherds were found in the backfill. Beneath the human skeletons was a layer of almost burnt clay. Unfortunately, the remains could not be subjected to anthropological analysis, as they disintegrated after being removed from the pit.

[3] 'Božej in the village of Libice, unfortunately, did not know anything about his fate. While he was sitting down to lunch with his son and wife, a boy came up to him and said, 'Look, sir, at the crowd of people who are rushing across the fields in great confusion.' But he replied, 'They are returning from the battle, may they come with God's blessing.' He had not even finished speaking, when behold, the fierce Beauty opens the door and flashes his drawn sword, crying out: 'Away with thee, thou villain, away with thee, thou wretch, who hast slain my kinsman Thomas without cause in Lent.' And his son Borut arose, saying: 'What do you, brethren? If it is ordered that we should be taken captive, we may be taken captive without weapons and without noise.' And then, without knowing it, they plunged a sword into his belly up to the hilt. And at that moment the sword, still covered with his son's blood, was thrust into his father's throat. And the assailants, like the conquerors of castles, dismantled their immense treasures, and, as Cato says, what was gained over a long time was soon lost. For of such riches, there was not a bit of cloth left to cover their bodies, but without a coffin and without burial, on the 27th of October, Božej and his son Borut were thrown naked like beasts into the pit...' (translated by L. Nezvalová).

[4] 'Some were led to the marketplace, and as cattle, they were slaughtered, others were beheaded on the mountain of Petřín; many were killed in dwellings or the streets...' (translated by L. Nezvalová).

The presence of animal bones, eggs, iron artefacts, and charcoal in the settlement features at the same time as the human remains could be indicative of ritual ceremonies that may have been performed when the individuals were deposited. However, due to the nature of the archaeological sources, we are unable to interpret them satisfactorily. They could, nevertheless, also be indicative of the waste function of the features, with the placement of bodies in such features indicating the aforementioned indifference or desire to dishonour. Death as a result of an epidemic would also come into consideration. Moreover, if the deaths occurred at the same time or shortly after each other, there may not have been time to dig corresponding grave pits for everyone, especially if the survivors were still suffering from the disease.

In the case of the feature from Bratislava, Ventúrska ulica, we can also consider a makeshift burial of combatants who may have fallen in a war clash. A 12th–13th c. find from Palárikovo (*Benadik 1975*, 23; *Hanuliak 1997*, 163) could also be related to the battle. Four individuals, one male, one female, and two juveniles, were found in a square pit house. The dwelling was to have been destroyed by fire and the dead were to have been violently killed. This misfortune is linked to the Tartar invasion.

Nine individuals were discovered in a 9th–10th c. settlement in Nitra-Tržnica (*Bednár/Fottová 2003*; *Nezvalová 2022*). The cause of their death was not found out by anthropological analysis. Besides them, animal bones and pottery were also found in the pit. Eleven graves from the 9th to 11th c. were also discovered in the vicinity. It is uncertain whether they were excavated after the settlement's demise or whether they existed simultaneously with it (*Bednár/Fottová 2003*, 307). There was no layer between the lowest deposited individual and the bottom of the feature, so the individuals may have been dumped into the feature when it was in use or shortly after it ceased to function (*Jakab 2003*). The body of a 20–30-year-old female was first found on top of the feature, with a backfill between her and the other bodies indicating her later burial. The remaining deceased were probably buried at the same time. Most of them were males aged between 20–50 years, in addition, there was one juvenile aged 12–15 years and one 20–30-year-old female. However, none of the skeletons had injuries that could confirm that they had died during combat. The report by *J. Jakab* (*2003*), also described in more detail in another paper by the author (*Nezvalová 2022*), describes exactly how the individuals were thrown into the feature. Based on this evidence it is not possible to interpret the feature as the clear result of a violent combat encounter as suggested by M. Hanuliak in his study (*Hanuliak 2020*, 88). The provisional burial of individuals that might reflect turbulent times could confirm the radiocarbon dating of the bones from this feature.

According to oral information from K. Daňová, a feature with several human individuals piled in one pit at Dolné Krškany was thus uncovered in 2021. The feature was located approximately 250 m from a Great Moravian burial site and was dated by ^{14}C dating to approximately the end of the 9th c.[5] Whether it was part of a settlement will only be possible to ascertain once the research has been evaluated. If a similar dating were to be demonstrated for the Nitra-Tržnica find, the deaths of the individuals may also have been the result of turbulent times, and these features could reflect the possible harshness of the period at the time of the demise of Great Moravia.

The upper part of the human body was found in feature C33 also in site Nitra-Tržnica (*Bednár/Fottová 2003*, 305, 306). However, it seems, according to a picture of *M. Hanuliak* (*2020*, fig. 2: 3) that the feature was not uncovered whole, so the rest of the body could have been destroyed with the rest of the feature.

For individuals who died on the hillforts, in the area inside the fortifications, it is also necessary to consider the possibility that the individuals could not be buried in the burial ground because of the immediate danger to the living. This can be attested by the finds from Mužla-Čenkov, which, according to the latest interpretation of M. Hanuliak (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 129), come from one time period that corresponds with the period of the demise of Great Moravia. Thus, they could have been victims or died during one of the combat clashes that undoubtedly took place in this period.

Some individuals may also have been victims of murder, and the dumping of their bodies was a way of disposing of them inconspicuously. This does not only apply to adults but also to new-born infants. However, in the recorded cases, it was not possible to identify potential victims.

Evidence of human skeletons found in settlements may evoke the use of defensive practices against the dangerous dead. This issue is still relevant. In our territory, this topic has long been dealt with by M. Hanuliak (e.g. *Hanuliak 1997*, 173), who has observed these manifestations in burial sites of the time, but also in individuals found in settlement features. It should be noted, however, that according to the recent interpretations, he has abandoned

[5] The burial site evaluation was published by *M. Hanuliak* (*2019a*).

them (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 129). These practices include burial on the side or stomach, unusually bent limbs, and unnatural head positions. It was the coincidence in the burial of individuals in burial sites and settlements that should have made the reasons for the burial of individuals in those contexts identical (*Hanuliak 1997*, 176, 177). Individuals found in settlements were supposed to represent a risky group that could return among the living, i.e. revenants. The placement of the body in a settlement feature was meant to be a form of prevention against the potential harmfulness of the dead. It was through the use of this ritual that negative manifestations could be attenuated and it was, therefore, safe to place the deceased near the living community.

This reasoning cannot be applied unquestioningly (if only because of the principle underlying revenantism) to individuals deposited in settlements. The revenant or returnee represents the dead who, for a variety of reasons, returns among the living. One category of revenants consists of those whose return has been due to the neglect of some of the requisites belonging to burial. The latter then returned to demand that this condition be rectified (*Navrátilova 2005*, 117). If the Great Moravians truly believed in the return of this group of the unfortunate, their primary goal would have been to bury them in accordance with all customs. The individuals found in the settlements in the territory in question, by virtue of their burial, do not usually fall into this category.

The second group consists of those revenants who have committed something against the rules of the community, whose death was something special, who was violently killed, or who committed suicide (*Navrátilová 2005*, 118). Since these people were expected to return, efforts had to be made to prevent their return. This was to be manifested, among other things, by the performance of preventive rites and measures to prevent the dead from rising from the grave. In the case of the revenants *J. Mjartan* (*1953*, 115–117) still in the 20th c. mentions laying the dead on his stomach, fastening his hands or clothes against the coffin, pouring poppy or millet into the grave, etc. Distance may have been one of the means of protecting oneself from a potential returnee. Murderers or suicides were also buried at crossroads, the boundaries of cadastres, precisely so that they would not hit back home (*Halliday 2010*, 81). In the Early Medieval period, burial sites were separated from settlements by a sufficient distance, possibly by natural barriers (*Hanuliak 2004*, 52, 53). These factors certainly played a role and may have constituted 'bonus' protection by separating the world of the living from the world of the dead. Therefore, there is no reason to consider the intercepted measures at the settlements as equivalent to those at the burial sites. All available means had to be used to discourage the risk of return. Thus, there was no reason to bury revenants in the settlements.

INDIVIDUALS AT CEMETERIES

At cemeteries, we found individuals buried in unusual positions, atypical orientations, or with signs of posterior interferences. These graves have attracted interest from the beginning of archaeological research (in the Middle European area, e.g. *Borkovský 1939*). In Slovakia, these graves have been found at 43 sites, whereas by 2004, for comparison, 275 cemeteries with 3410 flat graves dated to the 9th and 10th c. were recorded (*Hanuliak 2004*, 27).

Atypical body position

As the individuals were mostly buried in a supine position, atypical positions represent the findings of skeletons placed in a prone position or on the side. Although there are also variations in the supine position where the head may have been tilted to one side or the other, the lower limbs may have been slightly bent or crossed, and the upper limbs may not have been placed along the body but may have been placed, for example, on the chest. Some of these shifts may have been related to taphonomic processes that took place on the body after it was placed in the grave (on this issue: *Prokeš 2007*, 17–22) and thus were not intentional. In the case of the burial of one or both upper limbs in the abdomen or chest area, these manifestations are considered to be more a manifestation of the survivors' choice and, therefore, have not been included in this study. In Slovakia, 73 individuals were found in atypical positions at 22 localities.

At least 17 individuals were buried in the prone position (Pl. I; II), and only in three cemeteries more than one such skeleton has been found (Pl. I: 4; II: 1–3; three such individuals are recorded in Bratislava-Devín; *Plachá/Hlavicová/Keller 1990* and Borovce; *Staššíková-Štukovská 1986*, 98; four in Trnovec nad Váhom; *Točík 1971*).[6] Among the anomalous graves, they form the least numerous group.

No distinguished exceptions were noted when considering the location of graves within the site

[6] The burial site in Borovce has not yet been completely published and there is only a brief mention of these individuals, so the number of such buried individuals may not be final.

area. They were not isolated or otherwise significantly differentiated from traditional graves. In the case of Trnovec nad Váhom, the individuals in the prone position are concentrated in the south-eastern part, with a relatively large empty space between them. However, they are located among other graves in which individuals were buried in a standard manner. Here the problem of dating the cemeteries comes to the fore, as they are often only approximately assigned to a particular period and the phases of burials are not distinguished. In such cases, graves that were originally located on the edge of the burial ground may have been surrounded by regular graves over time, either because their location or uniqueness may have been forgotten with the passage of time, or a lack of space may have been the cause. This is especially true for larger burial grounds. The burial sites in Moravia at Rajhrad (*Staňa 2006*, 34) and Olomouc-Nemilany (*Přichystalová 2014*, 218) may point to a special emphasis on burying individuals in atypical positions. At Rajhrad, a group of skeletons deposited in the prone and lateral position was concentrated in the central part of the burial site on its southwestern edge. The graves were concentrated in an area to the north of a trough that may have originally enclosed the older part of the site (*Staňa 2006*, 34). However, it should be borne in mind that the other three deceased in the prone position were freely scattered among the regular graves, and also that the trough may not have enclosed the older part of the burial site according to more recent research (*Hendrychová 2014*, 106, 107). In Olomouc-Nemilany, grave 20 (man 30–40 years old; *Přichystalová et al. 2014*, 37) was located with two other burials at the boundary of two main groups in the burial ground (*Přichystalová/Kalábek 2014*, plan of the burial ground). Grave 17, with the second individual (woman 25–35 years old) deposited on its abdomen from this burial, was excavated at the edge of the south-eastern group of graves, its centre line oriented transversely to the other burials (*Přichystalová et al. 2014*, 34). This case may suggest her posthumous exclusion from the community.

The cubature of the burial pits could not be quantified in most cases because their metric data have not been published. In some, only their depth was given. This may have been influenced by the inappropriate pedological composition, in which the outlines of the grave pits were indistinct. The level from which the depths of the graves were documented should also be considered in the evaluation. There are known cases indicating the depth of graves from the level of detection, also data measured from the present ground. While we can give the dimensions of the pits, no universal rules can be deduced from them. The depth of the pits ranged from 35 to 140 cm, covering the range of seven of the nine depth grades delineated in the work of *M. Hanuliak* (*2004*, 75). None of the graves were deeper than 140 cm, so the deepest categories were not represented. Thus, this finding does not support the hypothesis that revenant grave pits were dug as deep as possible to prevent the undead from returning. However, graves must also be considered in the context of burials, as some soil types require more effort to excavate a pit than others.

There were several differences in the position of skeletal remains resting on the abdomen. In grave 24 at Závada, the left upper limb was found twisted behind the back (*Bialeková 1982*, 134). Some individuals had their lower limbs crossed (Devín, graves 34 and 85; *Plachá/Hlavicová/Keller 1990*, 46, 58), which may be related to their binding (*Prokeš 2007*, 27). For some graves, the details of their position are not given more precisely and they are referred to only as crouched in the prone position.

The orientation of the individuals in most graves does not differ from the usual one. As a standard, the bodies of those buried in this period tend to be placed in a W – E direction, possibly with deviations towards the southwest and northwest. Seven of the deceased were found in this way. Deviations towards the southwest or northwest from the usual direction occur regularly and there is no need to look for specific reasons behind them – they are usually caused by the configuration of the terrain (*Hanuliak 2004*, 112). Greater attention should be paid to graves where individuals were buried atypically, i.e. in the E – W or N – S direction and vice versa. Three of the deceased fell out of this course. All individuals were oriented in the opposite E – W direction, in graves 62 at Devín (*Plachá/Hlavicová/Keller 1990*, 54), 34 at Nitra-Pod Zoborom (Pl. I: 1; *Chropovský 1978*, 104), and grave 546 at Trnovec nad Váhom (Pl. II: 2; *Točík 1971*, 182).

Four individuals in the graves were identified as female or possibly female, a male was found in one grave. Women were also more likely to be buried in this position in Moravia (*Nezvalová 2018*, 15) and Bohemia (*Štefan 2009*, 148). In Poland, the situation is the opposite, with males lying on their stomachs dominating the graves, no children were found in this position (*Gardeła 2011*; *2012*). This difference may be due to Scandinavian influences, where mainly males are also found in the prone position (*Gardeła 2011*, 49). According to the author's more recent interpretations (*Gardeła 2017*, 92), the graves of such individuals are concentrated in areas where a legal culture was developing and thus may have been an application of justice and a form of punishment.

In Slovakia, no children were found in this position, these were juvenile to adult individuals. In Moravia, adults also dominate, only at the burial site in Prušánky were two children found, one aged 7–8 years, the other aged 13–14 years (*Klanica 2006*, 142, 176). According to anthropological analyses of grave 215 from Malé Kosihy (Pl. I: 2), a woman of *maturus* age suffered from a blockage of the fourth and fifth lumbar vertebrae due to trauma or an inflammatory process, and the inflammatory process altered the cranial surface of the body of the first sacral vertebra (*Vondráková/Hanuliak 2006*, 372). This condition must have caused her severe pain in the lumbosacral region.

An inventory was found in only one individual. A vessel was found in grave 548 in Trnovec nad Váhom (Pl. II: 3; *Točík 1971*, 182). Vessels do not belong to the prestigious inventory. This phenomenon is also common in Bohemia (*Štefan 2009*, 146), Poland, and Scandinavia (*Gardeła 2011*, 47). As the graves have minimal or no equipment, it is difficult to date them more precisely. Often, we can only determine them approximately according to the duration of the cemetery, so if the burial site is extensive and burials were dug there for a long time, it is impossible to date the grave more precisely.

As one of the few practices, the prone position is also mentioned in historical and ethnographic sources. During cholera epidemics, the dead were placed on their stomachs as a precaution. During an epidemic of humans, cattle, or another tragic event, the survivors could open the grave of the recently buried and turn the corpse face down (*Hoššo 1975*, 158). As late as the 20th c., individuals considered to be vampires were still buried in the face-down position (*Mjartan 1953*, 115). Given the considerable distance in time from the period we are examining, the question arises as to whether it is at all possible for this custom to have persisted for many centuries, and what and how many transformations it underwent during that time. *L. Gardeła* (*2017*, 105) had a correct observation on the use of modern sources in the interpretation of graves when he pointed out that in the case of the modern sources the dead were placed on their bellies only after the grave had been reopened, whereas in the Early Middle Ages no traces of grave reopening have been found, and thus it is likely that they were buried in this way deliberately for the first time.

Unfortunately, there are no surviving written sources from the period in the area under analysis that comment on burial customs. The existing written records are quite distant, both in time and geography. According to the period sources, King Pippin the Short was buried lying face down on a cross. This position was an expression of his repentance (*Štefan 2009*, 156). With the gradual consolidation of Christianity in the Great Moravian environment, it is, therefore, necessary to take this hypothesis into account.

Particularly in the case of individuals lying on their stomachs, who appeared to have been dumped into the pit, one might consider the careless or hasty execution of burial rites, perhaps linked to the low social status of the individual. Strangers who did not integrate sufficiently into the community may also have been deposited in this way. In the context of researching the issue, it is worth mentioning grave 7 found at the burial site in Tetín, Bohemia (*Kubálek et al. 2008*). It contained an individual placed in the prone position, who had a health handicap, as he was probably born with a skull cleft (*Kubálek et al. 2008*, 648, 649). From a medical point of view, he certainly required special care. His handicap had a high probability of injury and infection and yet he lived to a relatively old age (*adultus* I, 20–30 years). This deformity was probably accompanied by physical or mental disabilities. Therefore, a possible reason for this position of the corpse's deposition is also the physical or mental deformity of the individual and his or her associated difference and lack of integration into society. The difference from the majority society could also be confirmed by the discovery of a man from Břeclav-Pohansko (JP/129, found in feature 205), who had a gracile physique and thus differed from the majority of men in the southern bailey, which is usually interpreted as a settlement of warriors (*Přichystalová 2010*, 144).

It could also be an example of protection against hexes taken to the extreme (*Gardeła 2017*, 102), which was widespread throughout the world and also occurred in the Slavic environment.

In the case of individuals from burial sites, burial in this position evokes some form of punishment, or the consequence of the 'act', or it could have been the aforementioned lack of integration of the person into society, whether for psychological, physical, or possible alien reasons.

In the case of the graves at Devín, all three individuals had their legs crossed, which might suggest that they were tied. According to *A. Reynolds* (*2009*, 165), in England such individuals may have been hung upside down – in the *Harley Psalter*, the inverted crucifixion is depicted in this way. Individuals may have been hung in this way after being hanged. It also mentions that Jews were hanged in this way. In the late Middle Ages in southern Germany and Austria, dogs were sometimes hanged with them, to send the individual to an 'environment of non-humans'.

In 1619, in the Silesian town of Świdnica, a case was recorded of a woman who was buried alive

and her body was subsequently pierced with stakes as punishment for the murder of her two children. *L. Gardeła* (*2017*, 100) compares this case to the discovery of a woman in grave 110 from the Starý Zámek site, where there is a possibility that a woman in the prone position may have been buried alive and her body pierced with three stakes. Those two sites are quite close to each other, so he suggests the possibility of continuity of burial rituals in this territory.

Women may also have posed a danger in terms of magic and superstition, as a form of priestesses. Their existence would certainly not have suited the priests who were trying to establish Christianity as the dominant religion. So, women may have been put in this position deliberately, as a sign of some kind of humiliation, or just as a way of repenting for their way of life. Alternatively, they were to be denied access to the Christian afterlife. Fear of their 'abilities', which they must have already possessed during their lifetime, may also have played a role, and the aim of the measure may have been the aforementioned prevention of a return from the underworld. There have been recorded cases in modern society (*Kyll 1964*, 178, 179) where witches were to be buried face down because society feared that their soul might leave their bodies through their mouths. Such a case was also supposed to have happened in Hungary in the early 20th c. and may have reflected practices in the past.

Because the burial of an individual in the prone position as a way of repentance could be counted on mainly in societies where Christianity was more firmly rooted, or it would be more likely that such an individual would be found in church cemeteries, we can rather count on negative causes of burial of these individuals in the case of the Slovak finds. Although it may not have been a preventive measure against the return of the deceased from beyond the grave, these individuals may have been buried in this way as a form of punishment. The positive side, however, can be found in the fact that even though these individuals may have sinned, they still remained buried in the common cemetery and were thus not completely excluded from their community after death.

In Slovakia, 69 of the deceased were buried in the lateral position (Pl. II: 4; III–VIII), a somewhat higher number than in the prone position. As in the case of individuals on their stomachs, this position is attributed to the potentially dangerous undead who may have harmed the living (*Hanuliak 1998*, 102). Their exclusion from society, or possible endangerment of the survivors, could be confirmed by their position within the burial grounds. Graves are usually placed among individuals with the body in a standard position and orientation. If multiple such graves are present at a burial site, they are not concentrated in one location. In Trnovec nad Váhom (Pl. VII: 3–9; VIII), unlike the graves in the prone position, these graves are located in the northern and western parts of the burial ground, but it is not clear whether this could be related to the dating of the graves or other causes. Most of the individuals buried on their sides were interred in a somewhat crouched position. Only the individual in Bešeňov (grave 119; *Kraskovská 1958*, 424) was stretched out. In addition to the atypical orientation, 15 graves were additionally oriented transversely or opposite to the established orientation, which multiplies the distinctiveness of these graves. However, determining why this was the case is currently impossible.

There were four females and nine males interred in this position, thus males predominate, but a further 36 individuals, after excluding children, did not have their sex determined. In contrast to the prone position, children were also frequently buried in this position. In Čakajovce, in graves 587 (Pl. IV: 3) and 672 (Pl. IV: 4), young children (in the case of grave 672 it was two new-borns and in grave 587 it was a 6-month-old baby) were buried on their sides together with adult individuals (*Rejholcová 1995b*, 64, 75).[7] In both cases, the individuals were also interred in an east-west direction. Considering the age of the infants and the fact that they were attached to an adult it is not necessary to view this position only in a negative light. In children this young, it may be a case of being placed in the natural foetal position for them. The mere fact that they were buried, albeit with another adult, but placed in a grave and given a burial is indicative of a degree of care and therefore does not appear to be the burial of a dangerous deceased. In other cases, either older children were buried on the side or their ages were not more precisely determined. In the graves, however, they were alone, without an adult.

Grave goods were found in 18 graves. Inventory attributed to male warriors was uncovered in the grave of a 10-year-old child in Bojničky (knife, spur, strap ends, eyelet loops; *Bialeková 1993a*, 227, 228). For most of the buried we register items commonly found in burials from the 9th–10th c.

No factors come to the fore in the position on the side, allowing us to observe certain tendencies in

[7] In grave 672 was buried an adult woman and two newborns, she had two earrings and a knife (*Rejholcová 1995b*, 75). They were all interred in the ESE – WNW direction. In grave 587 a man of adultus age and a child were interred. The man had rather rich equipment: a bucket, a spear, a sword, an axe, an iron chair, a knife – a razor, a knife, a forging, and the bones of a hen. Both were lying in a SE – NW direction.

the burial of individuals in this position. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the side-lying position exhibits a great deal of variability, and what one author might classify as the deceased in the side-lying position would be classified by another author as a standard, but slightly skewed, position. It is also often not possible to judge whether the skeletal displacement may also have been due to taphonomic processes. The absence of data on the degree of crouching of the individual also many times does not allow us to distinguish between individuals buried in the extended position on their side and those crouched on their side, between which differences could perhaps be traced.

There were also individuals buried in different positions at the burial sites. However, these are only rarely encountered. They suggest that the burial ritual may have been even more varied in the Great Moravian period than it appears. In Slovakia, a seated position has been recorded at the burial site in Čakajovce (grave 415; Pl. IX: 1; *Rejholcová 1995b*, 45). In Moravia, it was also possible to register a kneeling position or the position of the upper limbs behind the head (Mikulčice-Klášteřisko, grave 1051; *Klanica 1985*, 499, 500; Mikulčice-Klášteřisko, grave 1042; *Klanica 1985*, 494; Staré Město-Na valách, graves 185a/AZ, 198/AZ, 203/AZ, 187/51; *Hrubý 1955*, 78).

In the above-mentioned individual from Čakajovce, grave 415 (Pl. IX: 1), according to the author of the research, the sitting position was probably the result of an unspecified disease (*Rejholcová 1995b*, 45). The buried individual had his skull slightly overturned, his upper limbs crossed and pulled to the mandible. He was a man of *senilis* age. A buckle was found in the grave under the left pelvic bone. Interesting is the trough-like folding of the grave pit bottom, which the mourners could have formed precisely because of the deceased's medical anomaly (*Rejholcová 1995b*, 45). The situation is slightly reminiscent of the case from Borovce. There, in grave 22/86, a woman was buried who had a pronounced hump probably as a result of tuberculosis (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2006*, 217). The hump must have caused her great pain – moreover, her altered appearance must have attracted attention (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2006*, fig. 16). As a result of her illness, the woman could not walk upright and probably had to sleep on her side. Nevertheless, she was placed in the grave in an outstretched position on her back. This was achieved by the survivors with wooden construction. Thanks to it, the woman rested in a kind of cradle, which allowed her to be buried as reverently as possible (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2006*, 218). Above the grave was documented a hearth, which could have had both a purifying effect from negative influences and a commemorative character. Moreover, the grave *'… does not form a row or group with other graves and is not disturbed by any or younger graves…'* (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2006*, 218). It is not located at the edge of the burial site but is placed almost in its centre. The fact that the grave was not disturbed even later was probably helped by its marking in the form of a structure and a long-lasting fire, which may indicate that the burying community knew about the uniqueness of the deceased. The same can be stated in the case of an individual from grave 229, also found in Borovce, who suffered from cancer (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2005*, 456, 457) and who, despite his illness, was buried in a group of men with rich furnishings, although no finds accompanied him on his journey to the grave itself. The woman in grave 422 in the same burial site also suffered from a disease that, although not causing dramatic changes in appearance, may have made her partially different in appearance from the rest of the population (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2005*, 457). She was buried in a part of the burial ground where superposition of graves is common, due to the meeting of different burial phases in the burial ground. Despite this, the grave was not disturbed (*Staššíková-Štukovská et al. 2005*, 447, 448), and even traces of a wooden structure were found in it. In the case of these individuals, we can thus observe that the manifestations related to the disease, did not have a discriminatory character in individuals within the community, which would have resulted in the need to apply apotropaic practices to them.

Atypical orientation

Deviations in orientation occur more frequently than atypical positions in burial sites.[8] Graves with a different orientation are also found in burial sites where the deceased buried in atypical body positions are not recorded. In the case of different orientations, two basic deviations are distinguished. Less numerous are the south and north orientations, in which the graves are oriented across to the general direction of the grave pit and in which the different methods of body burial must have been planned during the actual excavation of the grave pit. The eastern directions are more frequently recorded, forming the most numerous of the variations in the placement of the deceased in the grave, and greatly

[8] Specifically, these are orientations in the east-west and adjacent directions (NE – SW, SSE – WNW, SSE – WNW, SE – NW) and in the south-north or north-south direction (S – N, N – S, SW – SSE, SE – SSE, SE – SSE, SSE – SEE, SSE – SSE).

predominate over those buried in an atypical position and individuals placed in the northern and southern directions.

There were 65 individuals buried in the N – S, S – N, and adjacent azimuths. The body position of the individuals was dominated by the usual supine position, which was found in 34 cases. The deceased in the stretched position had both upper and lower limbs extended along the body in most cases. In a few cases, the arms were noted to be slightly or more bent towards the waist. There were 9 males and 10 females and 5 children buried in this direction. Interestingly, only males with age over 40 years were found buried in this direction. For females, all age categories were represented.

Inventory was found in 23 graves, i.e. slightly more than 41% of the graves. This is a little less than is common in burial sites in general (for comparison *Hanuliak 2004*, 123). The representation of artefacts varied in terms of both number and composition. Knives (12 graves) and vessels (11 graves) were the most common. The equipment usually consisted of one, two, or three items. A combination of a knife with a vessel, or with another artefact, was frequent. Although most of the graves contain features that are not considered to be rich, we also record a few with above-average equipment. An inventory typical for more prominent men was found in Devín-Za kostolom in grave 9 (vessel, bucket, spearhead, knife fragments; *Plachá/Hlavicová/Keller 1990*, 40).

In the E – W direction and adjacent azimuths, 159 individuals were buried at 29 sites. Interesting in this respect is the cemetery in Bešeňov, location Papföld, where all individuals were buried in this way (*Szőke/Nemeskéri 1954*). The dominant position of the individuals oriented in the east-west direction and its variants was extended (106 individuals). However, we also record individuals buried in the prone position (3 individuals) and lateral position (12 individuals).

There were 38 females and 26 males buried in this orientation. There were 39 children, 37 individuals had no age or sex determined. Grave inventories were found in 79 cases. The most frequently recorded finds were those regularly found in early medieval graves – knives (32 graves) and vessels (19 graves). Of the jewellery, earrings were the most frequently found (22 graves). Among the individuals buried in the eastern directions, there were also those whose grave inventory can be considered above standard. Grave 788 at the burial site in Čakajovce contained a knife, sickle, axe, bucket fittings, spurs, buckles, tongue-shaped strap ends, and frame-shaped eyelet loops (Pl. IX: 3; *Rejholcová 1995b*, 88), thus it contains attributes that are usually attributed to male warriors.

Mongoloid features were found in graves 24 and 31 at Závada (*Bialeková 1982*, 136), where one of the deceased was placed on his stomach and the other lay in an E – W line. In both cases, they were probably female. However, Mongoloid features were also present in this burial site in nine other individuals who were buried regularly. Similarly, this is true for other individuals with proven pathological changes on the skeleton. In Nitra, in the burial site Dolnozoborská cesta, in grave 42 (Pl. IX: 4), a man, oriented in the NE – SW direction, aged between 40 and 50 years (*Jakab 1978*, 134), was found to have tuberculosis of the ninth to twelfth thoracic vertebrae and the first cervical vertebrae (*Jakab 1978*, 144). The diagnosis caused their deformity and subsequent hump. However, the individual was placed in the grave in an erect position, despite the handicap.

Based on these findings, we conclude that the deformities and pathological phenomena detectable on the skeleton in the vast majority of cases did not play an important role in the decision for atypical burial. In almost all cases, we can find individuals with the same anomalies buried in a particular burial site also in a regular manner. A unifying element is absent in the archaeological material, as individuals with the aforementioned physical features lack a universal measure that would link them, and for which a non-standard burial without an observable system is applied.

Individuals interred in the opposite direction to the established one represent a diverse group of individuals that must be analysed separately. In this group, we find both the deceased whose equipment can be considered above standard, and those buried without equipment in an atypical position. An example is the burial site in Čakajovce (*Rejholcová 1995a*; *1995b*), where 25 deceased were oriented in the E – W and related directions.

Of interest is grave 226 (Pl. IX: 2; *Rejholcová 1995b*, 25), in which a woman of *maturus* age was interred in a SE – NW orientation, i.e. opposite to the majority of those buried there. It was located on the north-eastern edge of the burial site. The grave inventory contained, among other things, four preserved mosaic beads, which are rarely found at sites in Moravia and Slovakia and usually only in one or two pieces (*Ungerman 2005*, 725). The eyes on the mosaic beads may have had an apotropaic function. In the same way, the so-called serpentine pendant (after *Ungerman 2005*, 730) or the Těmice type pendant (after *Chorvátová 2015*, 164) suggests that the person may have been endowed with certain special abilities that determined his or her special place in society and that may have influenced the reserved burial place. These pendants are associated with women or girls, the moon, and fertility. The lunette

and the associated moon also have a relationship with exceptional abilities and knowledge. Moon goddesses were also considered goddesses of magic and sorcery (*Chorvátová 1998*, 138), which would signal the function of the woman from grave 226. It was she who may have served the community as a 'spirit guide' who had magical and healing powers (*Přichystalová/Boberová 2020*, 126). A similar situation has been found at the Michal nad Žitavou site, location Domovina. In grave 36/56 they uncovered a woman whose body was placed in the orientation ESE – WNW (*Točík 1971*, 197). The grave was situated on the southern edge of the burial site. The woman wore the first type of the so-called serpentine pendant on her neck, in the shape of two side-by-side coiled serpents with their tails, touching and their heads pointing towards each other (*Ungerman 2005*, 730). In this case, too, therefore, we can consider the burial of a woman with exceptional abilities. Moreover, these graves date from roughly the same period, a time when inhumation burials began, and the two burial sites are not so far from each other.

In the case of the east-west orientations, the Čakajovce are specific, as most of the grave pits were of an above-standard size, and some even contained above-standard equipment (*Rejholcová 1995a*, 8). In this case, it is possible to speculate on the hypothesis that these individuals also belonged to a marginal group, but one that was on the 'positive' fringe of society. Even the richly furnished male grave (grave 788; PL. IX: 3; *Rejholcová 1995b*, 88), considered to be the oldest inhumation grave in the cemetery, was oriented in the opposite direction. We can therefore speculate that, in the case of this site, the deceased who played a prominent or leading role in the community were deposited in the opposite direction. A parallel could be sought in the 17th c., when priests were oriented in the opposite direction to the established direction of burial (*Unger 2006*, 110), and were supposed to face their congregation even after death. Thus, these persons too could 'lead their fellows safely to the afterlife'.

Excessive grave pits were also recorded at the burial site in Veľký Grob, where two (graves 87 and 101; Pl. X: 1, 2) had a volume of more than 10 m^3 (*Chropovský 1957*, 183, 185). Interestingly, in this burial site, in the ESE – WNW, and E – W directions, exclusively women were buried. The graves of men, although also some with excessive volume, deviated to the south, in the SE direction. From Moravia, there are known sites where almost exclusively men were buried in the opposite direction. At the Holubice burial site, men (11 individuals) and children (8 individuals) were buried in the opposite direction. Only one woman buried in the E – W direction was found (*Geisler 1992*, 362). An analogous situation was supposed to be in Vícemilice (*Šikulová 1958*, 99, 100). Interestingly, both sites are geographically quite close to each other. We have no documented cases of this kind in Slovakia. In contrast, gender orientation is common in 11th–12th c. Poland and Eastern Europe (*Ungerman 2007*, 49). According to *A. Koperkiewicz* (*2003*, 316), this is related to dualism, which is strongly rooted in the mentality of Indo-European peoples.

Posterior interventions

Posterior interventions (Pl. X: 3, 4; XI–XIII) found on skeletons in 9th–12th c. graves in the studied area can be divided into two large groups – accidental and intentional. The accidental ones include those interventions in which the grave was not disturbed deliberately – the consequences of sand or clay extraction, agricultural work, etc. Their primary aim was not to damage the grave.

Under accidental interventions, we can also include the activity of animals, demonstrated for example at the burial site of Nitra-Šindolka, where several graves with the presence of animal burrows have been documented. A skeleton of a small animal was even found in grave F95 (*Fusek 2011*, 121, 122). Tree roots may also be responsible for the movement of bones. A documented case comes from Moravia, the site of Pohansko-Jižní předhradí, grave 3 (*Přichystalová 2011*, 28). Individual bones may have been broken during the collapse of a wooden structure (*Prokeš 2007*, 19). In Mikulčice, in the burial site near the 6th church, several graves were disturbed during stone quarrying (*Profantová 2003*, 50).

The disturbance of an older grave during the excavation of a new one can also be described as an accidental intervention. The bones were then, as part of a commemorative act, piled up or pushed aside against the grave wall. Such interventions have been recorded in Moravia in large burial grounds and church cemeteries with long-term burials. The largest number of clusters was discovered at the site of Staré Město-Na valách, where 47 of them were found, and, as the author of the publication V. Hrubý claims, they are related to the disturbance of older graves by younger ones (*Hrubý 1955*, 73, 74). The placing of bones on the pile represents a reverential way of dealing with the remains, the disturbance of which could not be avoided in multi-layered burials. The same case occurred at another burial site from Uherské Hradiště, the Sady location. Three bone clusters came from graves with possible pre-Moravian dating (*Galuška 1996*, 76). Also, in connection with the excavation of a pit for a younger grave, bones from grave 79 in

Mikulčice, in the burial ground near the 6th church, were piled together (*Profantová 2003*, 25). Another church cemetery where bone clusters were recorded was at the 1st church in Břeclav-Pohansko. They were found in graves 163 and 322, and in both cases, they are related to the excavation of additional grave pits (*Kalousek 1971*, 106, 177).

Bone clusters have been documented at six sites in western Slovakia. In Lipová-Ondrochov, the bones were piled in a heap, with the exception of the bones of one foot in grave 4/57 (Pl. XI: 6). These remained in their original position (*Točík 1971*, 204). According to the plan, the grave was not disturbed by another grave. Moreover, together with grave 3/57, it is located at a considerable distance from the other graves (*Točík 1971*, plan 3). The second grave from this site, marked 30/57 (Pl. XII: 1), was located among the other graves. Only the skull remained in its original position, the remaining bones were also piled together (*Točík 1971*, 208). At Závada, the bones were also found in the centre of the pit. The grave in this case was disturbed during road construction (*Bialeková 1982*, 132). Graves 20, 24, and 84 at the Bešeňov site, Papföld location, were disturbed in an unspecified way (*Szőke/Nemeskéri 1954*, 116). A bone pile containing the remains of two individuals identified as grave 14 was found at Devin-Staré Vinohrady (*Kraskovská 1963*, 394). A pile of children's bones was marked as grave 19 at this site (*Kraskovská 1963*, 396). In neither case, however, was it possible to determine the contours of the grave pit or the reason for the movement of the skeletons. At Pobedim-Na laze II, the skeleton of a 1–2-year-old child was seemingly piled into a kind of backpack (*Bialeková 1993b*, 182). Because we also encounter relatively shallow graves at this site (*Bialeková 1993b*, 193), perhaps the bones of a child could have come from just such a grave. The grave could have been uncovered after an unspecified time and its remains may have been buried more deeply. Three clusters of bones have been found in Čakajovce (Pl. XI: 2–4). One contained the skeleton of one adult, the second of three individuals, and the third of four individuals (*Rejholcová 1995b*, 7, 8, 10). According to the plan, they were located in a part of the burial site with a denser concentration of graves, but the pits were not disturbed. However, this does not rule out the possibility that they may have come from the originally destroyed graves, whose remains have been clustered together in a single mound. All three were relatively shallow, located at depths of 35–42 cm.

In church cemeteries, bone clusters can be seen as a way of taking a pragmatic approach to dealing with unplanned human remains uncovered. Due to the limited burial space, the longer-term use of the cemetery inevitably led to the disturbance of existing graves. The same situation also exists in the church cemeteries of the High Middle Ages (*Unger 2006*, 60). In this case, it is useless to look for negative connotations.

It is more difficult to interpret these finds in burial sites where there was sufficient space for their proliferation. The bone clusters here are not found in superposition with another grave. It is possible to speculate that the original graves were too shallow and therefore easily disturbed. The bones may have been subsequently collected and reburied so that the dead could rest in peace. They may also have been uncovered in the now-untraceable activity that caused them to be moved. In the case of deliberate disturbance of a grave as a precautionary measure, the utmost caution must be exercised in interpretation. If all secondary grave disturbances are considered, together with the unusual positions of buried individuals and their orientation, which can also be interpreted as a form of such disturbance, these graves make up a relatively large proportion of the sites. The grave pit disturbances mentioned above are concentrated at the same sites. Considering the fact that the implementation of these preventive measures would take a considerable amount of time, we cannot attribute to them all the interventions.[9] It is always necessary to assess each case individually and not generalize.

The intentional disturbance may also include recent activities such as the activities of detectorists. In fact, the archaeological research itself is a form of intentional disturbance. However, during the research, we also find graves that have been disturbed in the past and it is very difficult to determine when this occurred. Some of the manipulations of the body may have been carried out just after death, before the actual burial. The degree of preservation of individual joint connections can be helpful in determining the time since death in which the manipulation may have taken place. There are two types – strong articulations, which are subject to decomposition only after several years, and weak ones, which may disengage shortly after death (*Prokeš 2007*, 17). However, the strength of the joints is also affected by how they have been stressed during life, and also depends on where in the body they are located. The areas

[9] K. Marešová in her publication on the burial site Uherské Hradiště-Sady-Na Horních Kotvicích states that it took one worker 5.5 hours to dig a grave pit with contemporary tools. In the case that period tools were used, the time spent digging could have been up to twice as long (*Marešová 1983*, 16). Although the soil at the site in question is heavy, digging in it is more difficult than in loess or sandy soils, shovelling a pit represents considerable effort and consumes a lot of time.

around body openings break down the fastest. The process can be slowed down by the presence of clothing. *E. Aspöck* (*2011*, 303), while excavating the Longobard burial site at Brunn am Gebirge, distinguished several stages of secondary grave disturbance. She focused on the state of preservation of the soft tissues at the time the grave was reopened, assuming that the body was buried shortly after death and the soft tissues had not yet succumbed to biostratinomic factors:

1. The grave was opened shortly after burial and the body had not yet begun to decompose, so it could be moved without necessary disintegration. The result may have been an empty grave, a body in an unusual position, or partially pulled from the grave. Graves without the presence of a skeleton have been documented, for example, at the burial site of Malé Kosihy (*Hanuliak 1994*, 28). Of these, however, 11 belonged to young children, so their remains may have been completely digested. There is also the possibility that they had only a symbolic function. They could have been cenotaphs.
2. The grave was opened during the process of decomposition. The body is held together by ligaments, tendons, or clothing. Body parts may have separated on movement, other parts may have become dislocated in position. Grave 1472 found in Mikulčice in the burial ground near the 12th church corresponds to the second stage of secondary disturbance (*Kavánová 2003*, 282). The lower limbs of the individual were rotated 180° relative to the rest of the body, so they had to be manipulated while the articulations were preserved.
3. When opened, the body was fully skeletonized but still surrounded by the hollow space of the coffin or other structure. The third degree of disturbance was recorded in grave 128, at the burial site of Holubice (*Geisler 1986*, 19). The individual bones were arranged to respect a uniform line along the south, west, and north walls. This makes it appear as if the disturbance occurred within a limited space.
4. When the grave was reopened, the body was fully skeletonized and all structures within the grave had collapsed or were not present at all. The skeleton from grave 121 at Malé Kosihy was completely overturned, most of the bones were concentrated in the centre of the grave pit, and none of them were in their original anatomical order (*Hanuliak 1994*, 28, pl. XXVII: D). The wooden structure in the grave was absent or not preserved.

Secondary interventions are not the domain of Great Moravian sites alone. In French burial sites from the Merovingian period, up to 39% of graves were disturbed, with almost every grave affected in some sites and none in others (*van Haperen 2010*, 3). On the skeletons from Slovakia, 387 disturbances have been identified. In the case of burials without the presence of a sacred structure, the percentages of dislocated graves vary. Among the sites, Pobedim-Na laze is particularly noteworthy, where up to 65% of skeletons were supposed to have been damaged – in Tvrdošovce, at the Halomi domb location, the figure was 54%. At other burial sites, the number of posterior measures is much lower.

The result of intentional intervention was a deliberate disruption of the skeleton. This was done in order to rob it or for other reasons. Looting was not as frequent in the period under study as in other time periods. Grave robbing may also have occurred in the Great Moravian period. One of the few surviving written sources from this period, *Zakon sudnyj ljudem*, in one of its points, speaks about the desecration of corpses: *'27. Kdo mrtvé v hrobě svléká, ať je pokutován…'* (*Vašica 1966*, 155).[10] This suggests that the manipulation of the dead took place even after their burial, and it is likely that the robbers were not content with just clothes. In the case of archaeological sources, however, it may be difficult to document these interventions. The existence of this law also suggests that the unclean condition of the deceased, which was intended to apply to inventory added to the body (*Hanuliak 2006*, 148), was probably not a sufficient argument for allowing the deceased to rest in peace. A high percentage of robbed graves in the early medieval period is attested, especially among the Longobards (*Aspöck 2011*, 300). In the case of the Avars in the territory of Slovakia, it has been documented at around 12% of graves (*Ďuricová 2012*, 150), with the proportion being as high as around 30% or more at some sites. Grave robbing may be indicated by the presence of a shaft through which the robbers were supposed to have accessed the skeleton and the valuable artefacts that were near it. However, these are not often found, especially in shallow graves (*Fusek 2011*, 123). Also, soil conditions do not always allow the identification of secondary excavation. Excavation can also indicate the presence of grave goods or their fragments in the backfill of a grave pit. The robbery was more likely in burial sites with rich grave goods, i.e. in centres where power was accumulated. It is not surprising, therefore, that it has been attested at several locations on the Mikulčice hillfort (near the 3rd, 6th, 7th and 12th churches), where it has been

[10] '27. Whoever strips the dead in the grave, let him be fined...' (translated by L. Nezvalová).

linked to its violent plundering at the beginning of the 10th c., possibly to the state crisis of 870–871, or to isolated actions during the hillfort's existence. In the burial ground near the 6th church, 15 robbed graves have been reliably documented, but according to *N. Profantová* (*2003*, 50), there were certainly more. At the 7th church, two graves were supposed to have been robbed, at the 12th church it was even up to a fifth of all graves, counting only those with clear signs of robbery (*Kavánová 2003*, 281). For the 3rd church, it is stated that the graves were 'from the greater part robbed' (*Poulík 1975*, 76). However, according to the latest research, in the case of the 3rd church, it will be necessary to revise the findings presented by J. Poulík. According to Š. Ungerman and B. Kavánová, the robbing of graves is unlikely in most cases (*Ungerman/Kavánová 2010*, 76). It should be noted, that in more than half of the secondarily disturbed graves in cemeteries an inventory remained. It testifies against robbing for the sake of obtaining valuable artefacts in most burial sites. In Slovakia, it has not been possible to unequivocally demonstrate robbed graves from this period.

Interventions have also been identified in graves where rich equipment was found. Hence, other causes for posterior measures must be reckoned with. Based on skeletal disturbance, these can be divided into three areas: 1) skull disturbances, 2) thoracic and abdominal disturbances, and 3) limb disturbances, and each category may have been combined on a single skeleton. Skull disruptions were recorded in 118 cases, without distinguishing the causes for which they occurred. In some cases, the skull was found crushed or displaced, or missing, or, conversely, only a skull without a skeleton was found in the grave pit. In such a situation, the head could have been separated during life or just before burial, which should be evidenced by the chop marks. In many cases, however, a more detailed anthropological assessment is lacking. The absence of a skull in a grave pit has been documented in several burial sites. In Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 278, only the mandible and the postcranial skeleton of a juvenile were preserved (*Točík 1971*, 157). The grave was 46 cm deep. The burial site has only been published in the form of a brief catalogue, so no further information on the findspot is available. The skull was missing from the grave of child 5/61 in Pobedim (*Vendtová 1969*, 172). The absence of a skull in the case of males is usually explained by the fact that they are convicts. In the case of a child, as in this case, this is unlikely. According to the publication, the grave should have been 60 cm deep, so it could have been ploughed. However, it is questionable why the rest of the body remained intact. In adults, the absence of the skull is more frequently encountered. The skull was also missing from an individual from grave 3 at the burial site in Galanta-Hody (*Hanuliak/Ižóf 2002*, 325). In addition, the man who died in adulthood, i.e. between 20–40 years of age, had his lower limbs crossed. In his grave, he had a knife, a razor, and a sparking stone, which should have made it the grave with the most valuable collection in the cemetery (*Hanuliak/Ižóf 2002*, 336). Together with the presence of a pole construction in the grave pit, this does not suggest a marginal position of the individual in society. A skull was also missing from grave 52 at Bučany, in which a woman was buried (*Hanuliak 1993*, 85). With the missing skulls, it is difficult to determine the reason why they were not found. The poor preservation of the skeleton often makes it impossible to detect the presence of chop marks, which could be a sign of deliberate decapitation (*Kajkowski 2013*, 158).

The situation is similar for skulls that were located further away from the body or were turned over. In these cases, we can consider their violent separation, which may have caused the death of the individual, or may have happened shortly after death. The skull may also have been displaced due to the existence of a primary or secondary hollow space. If it has been laid on organic support, skull displacement or overturning may occur following its disintegration. However, it is unlikely that it could have shifted by more than a few centimetres, as such a shift should have been prevented by the backfill. If a coffin was present in the grave, its dimensions would certainly not be sufficient to allow such movement. It would also hardly be possible for the skull to turn 180° and be face down. Nevertheless, such cases are encountered in early medieval inhumation burials.

A skull was lifted from its original place and buried in fragments 15 cm above the right shoulder in Bešeňov, location Papföld, grave 18, with a bronze ring found above it (*Szőke/Nemeskéri 1954*, 111). The skull in grave 80 at the Sírdűlő location at the Bešeňov site was also displaced 10 cm further south (Pl. XI: 1). Neither tibiae nor pelvic bones were found *in situ* (*Nevizánsky 1979*, 382). A relocated skull was also found in graves 255 and 290 (Pl. XIII: 2, 3) in Trnovec nad Váhom (*Točík 1971*, 156, 158) and Veľký Grob, grave 102 (Pl. XIII: 5; *Chropovský 1957*, 185).

The skulls were moved to the area of the thorax and abdominal cavity at the sites of Bešeňov, Veľký Grob and Trnovec nad Váhom. At Veľký Grob, the skull was placed on the chest in grave 15 (*Chropovský 1957*, 176). The skull placed under the pelvis was that of the man from grave 255 in Trnovec nad Váhom, with the lower jaw left in place (Pl. XIII: 2; *Točík 1971*, 156). A skull in grave 44 at the Nitra-Lupka site was

supposed to have been placed on the toes of a child (Pl. XII: 4; *Chropovský 1962*, 188). At Bešeňov, grave 6 (Pl. X: 4), the skull was lying on femurs relocated to the centre of the grave pit, with only the tibiae of the entire skeleton remaining in the original location (*Nevizánsky 1979*, 377).

In Bešeňov, the Papföld location, only the mandible was found in grave 60 (*Szőke/Nemeskéri 1954*, 115). An arrowhead was discovered on the sides of both calves of the man. A mandible was also found in the grave 278 of a juvenile individual in Trnovec nad Váhom (*Točík 1971*, 157).

Not only the repositioning of the skull but also the turning of it into an unnatural position is found in early medieval burials. A man of *senilis* age (over 60 years) was in a strongly crouched position on his left side and his skull faced downwards (*Lesák/Musilová 1999*, 41). At Malé Kosihy, the man in grave 38 (Pl. XII: 2), who died between the ages of 40 and 50, was placed in the supine position, with his skull turned with the lower jaw facing west (*Hanuliak 1994*, fig. 25: 1). The skeleton was not otherwise secondarily disturbed. A skull turned upside down was found in the grave 83 of a man in Veľký Grob (Pl. XIII: 4; *Chropovský 1957*, 182). The mandible in the secondary position remained in grave 2 at the site of Bešeňov, position Sírdűlő, while the skull, as well as the bones of the left leg, were not preserved (Pl. X: 3; *Nevizánsky 1979*, 376).

For adults, it is certainly not surprising that more skull transfers were recorded in males. This is related to the fact that these cases may include individuals who committed a crime and were executed as a result. Among the individuals who have been punished in this way, males have dominated. Of the 46 graves with displaced skulls, 36 belonged to males, eight to females, and the remainder had no designated gender. Of the female graves, grave 9 from the Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta is particularly noteworthy (*Chropovský 1978*, 101). The woman had a severely deformed skull of the so-called Aymar type. This type is created by bandaging the infant's head and results in a conical skull shape (*Elgyütt 2014*, 112). It is known in the studied territory mainly from the Migration period and is predominant, especially in girls and young women (*Horáčková/Strouhal/Vargová 2004*, 79). The woman found in Nitra was 40 to 50 years old at the time of her death. In addition to a deformed skull turned face down into the ground, she also had her right lower limb bent so that it reached down to her pelvis. She was probably tied up to achieve this bend. One other unusual female grave has been documented at this site. It contained a woman, of *maturus* age, who was buried on the skeleton of a horse, which was supposed to have been buried at the same time as her (*Chropovský 1978*, 99). Although the grave inventory is nothing special, the unusual manner of burial would suggest that the women were foreigners. They could have been married into the community, for example. As foreigners, they could also have aroused suspicion.

The woman buried in Bojničky, grave 12, would have had her lower limbs crossed at the forelegs, which would indicate that they were bound (*Prokeš 2007*, 27, fig. 11). Crossed lower limbs were also found in three male graves. In the case of grave 3, in Galanta-Hody, the skull was also missing (*Hanuliak/Ižóf 2002*, 325). However, skull transfers also occurred in children, who are unlikely to have been punished for their actions. The skull was missing from Pobedim (grave 5/61; *Vendtová 1969*, 172), and a skull was found at the feet in grave 44 from Nitra-Lupka (Pl. XII: 4; *Chropovský 1962*, 188).

The absence of a skull in the grave due to decapitation is attributed in Moravia to grave 31 from Velké Hostěrádky. A 20- to 30-year-old man was supposed to be buried there (*Ludikovský/Snášil 1974*, 24). The authors of the paper have eliminated the possibility that the skull was ploughed away or may have decayed. However, it cannot be ruled out that the skull could have been removed from the grave at a later date. As was the case with the transfer of the skull to the chest of the man from grave 24 at the Olomouc-Nemilany site. This man could also have been the victim of a combat encounter, a crime, or could have been a convict (*Přichystalová/Kalábek 2014*, 217). These hypotheses can be applied to essentially all skulls that have been moved, reversed, or removed from a grave, unless accidental interference (such as disturbance by digging another grave pit, by stone extraction, or until we have documented other clues that could specify the cause of this condition) could be identified.[11] In the case of decapitation, battle wounding, or crime, the marks of slashes on the cervical spine might be helpful. After traumatic alteration by decapitation, a transverse cut is usually present in the region of the cervical vertebrae, especially the cranial vertebrae, but also the seventh cervical or first thoracic vertebrae (*Horáčková/Strouhal/Vargová 2004*, 88). The cut wound often also affects the mandible, *processus mastoideus*, or first rib. In the case of secondary displacement of the skull, identification of the shaft

[11] Due to stone quarrying, the skull was relocated in graves 36 and 40 in the burial ground in Mikulčice near the 6th church. As a result of digging a pit for a new grave, skulls were moved in graves 271, Břeclav-Pohansko, burial site near the church (*Kalousek 1971*, 158), 85 in Mikulčice near the 6th church (*Profantová 2003*, 26), 1470 in Mikulčice near the 12th church (*Kavánová 2003*, 286), 220 in Mušov (*Jelínková 1999*, 58).

through which it may have been subsequently removed and relocated would be helpful.

Sometimes the second skull is discovered in the grave pit. The latter was found at the burial site in Trnovec nad Váhom in grave 122. It was placed next to the left knee (Pl. XIII: 1; *Točík 1971*, 147). Since the burying in the cemetery was long-term, the skull may have been from the older, disturbed grave, although according to the plan, this grave did not disturb any other. More than one skull has also been found in graves from the Avar Khaganate period. Although most of the finds were when the skull got into the grave accidentally, when another grave was disturbed, there were three situations in Holiare and Prša when such an interpretation cannot be used (*Ďuricová 2007*, 334, 335). The above-mentioned author interprets their insertion into the grave as an expression of piety and respect.

Two human and one-horse skulls without the presence of a body were found in Tvrdošovce in feature 10/75 (*Kraskovská/Paulík 1978*, 89). If this was a ritual burial, it may have had similar causes to the presence of the redundant skull in the grave, i.e. an attempt at a reverential deposition of the remains. The find in grave 19 at the Nitra-Lupka site was also specific (Pl. XII: 5; *Chropovský 1962*, 181). A woman with two children were buried in the grave. While one was resting in the woman's womb and thus probably still unborn inside the mother's body at the time of burial, the other was placed on the mother's chest, but its head lay between the woman's pelvic bones. The reason for the strange positioning of the child's head could theoretically be 'natural'. If the child's head was indeed detached at birth and remained wedged in the birth canal, as the author believes (*Chropovský 1962*, 199), it could have been later pushed between the woman's thighs by putrefactive processes as a form of 'partial' birth in a coffin (this phenomenon has been discussed by *P. Fojtík* and *L. Prokeš 2004* in their paper). However, the head may also have been separated from the child's body after birth and may have been deliberately placed between the thighs during burial. In such a case, it is difficult to estimate the reason why this was done. If there was originally a primary hollow space in the grave, the head may have rolled down between the thighs, but this is impossible to assess from the pictorial documentation.

At several sites, only the human mandibles of buried individuals were moved. Situated behind the skull, it was found in grave 4 at the Galanta-Hody site (*Hanuliak/Ižóf 2002*, 325). The mandible was relocated to the thoracic region in grave 28, at Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta (Pl. XII: 7; *Chropovský 1978*, 103). In Lipová-Ondrochov (grave 2/57; Pl. XI: 5), the mandible was found about 10 cm north of the skull (*Točík 1971*, 204). In Hurbanovo, a skull without a mandible was discovered (*Točík 1971*, 188).

In the surveyed area we also register crushed skulls, which were found in 84 cases. Mostly, however, other parts of the body were also disturbed. Only the skull was damaged in 16 cases. Of these, most, up to 48, were observed in Pobedim-Na laze (*Bialeková 1993b*; *Vendtová 1969*). In the context of specific graves, it is usually difficult to determine whether the skull was broken deliberately or whether it is merely a remnant of post-depositional processes (*Kajkowski 2013*, 157). Different explanations tend to be given for the damage to the skull. Accidental interventions include the crushing of the skull by soil pressure, its damage during coffin collapse, crushing during deep ploughing, and so on. Intentional intervention in the form of skull-crushing is usually justified by the need to protect against the 'living dead' or grave robbing. The intention to damage the skull deliberately as part of protection could be evidenced by the existence of a secondary excavation, a shaft, but these are rarely found during excavation (*Hanuliak 2006*, fig. 8: 2; *Krumphanzlová 1964*, 185, 186). Of the total number of crushed skulls, 40 belonged to children ranging from the youngest, barely a few months old, to children of about ten years of age. It is in this group of individuals that we can consider an increased rate of skull-crushing by earth pressure. One reason for this is the fragility of their bones due to incomplete ossification. In six cases the skull of juveniles was crushed, four of whom were females – in two cases the sex was not determined. In the case of adults, females also predominated, found in 11 cases as against four males. It is noteworthy that in only three cases the crushed skull was found in graves with the individual in an unusual position. Once it was a woman in grave 215 placed on her stomach at the Malé Kosihy (Pl. I: 2; *Hanuliak 1994*, 23), the other time it was a ten-year-old child in the prone position at the Bojničky site, Cintorínske pole location (*Bialeková 1993a*, 226, 227). At Trnovec nad Váhom, the individual was placed on their right side (*Točík 1971*, 156). In all three cases, only the skull was damaged, the postcranial skeleton was not mutilated. If this was indeed a precautionary measure, should not more cases also occur in non-standard positions? Only 17 graves out of all were oriented the other way around.

Transformations of the bones of the thorax occurred most frequently of all interventions. This is probably related to the fact that the chest, or head, was usually the area where most valuables were found (upper part for women, lower part for men) and thus should have been a more frequent target for grave robbers. The chest also contained vital

organs that could have been potential targets for destruction when a living community was threatened. However, not all spatial movements of ribs, vertebrae, or surrounding bones can be attributed to intentional disturbance (*Prokeš 2007*, 21). There may be both intentional and unintentional reasons behind their movements, which are difficult to interpret. We cannot assume that, given that they are always concentrated in the same locations, they were all made with the intention of making the deceased harmless. Nor can we draw the same conclusions about other secondary interventions. It may also be worth drawing attention to an area of criminal law that has been largely neglected in interpretations up to the present.[12]

There have been fewer interventions in the limbs than in the chest. Violation of the lower torso and limbs, or their displacement, may perhaps imply an attempt to immobilize the deceased (*Hanuliak 2006*, 151). Some cases of limb absence could be associated with amputation. Lower limb amputation has been documented in Moravian burials at Mikulčice in two cases (*Profantová 2003*, 25; *Stloukal/Vyhnánek 1978*), once at Rajhrad (*Hanáková/Staňa/Stloukal 1986*, 67), and once at Prušánky (*Vyhnánek/Hanáková 1988*, 211, 212).

In Mikulčice, in grave 78 near the 6th church, a man aged 40–50 was found. He had his left leg and right upper limb amputated (*Profantová 2003*, 25). Such a cruciate amputation should have made it impossible for the individual to hold a weapon and dismount a horse (*Unger 2006*, 159). At Klášteřisko in grave 1035, the individual had his left leg amputated (*Stloukal/Vyhnánek 1978*). This was a 40 to a 50-year-old man. In addition, he had healed fractures of both forearms and was lying in an E – W direction. This type of forearm fracture occurs when the individual uses his hand to protect his face. The amputated left lower limb, which did not belong to the individual from grave 1035, was found buried about two meters away. The cause of the amputation could not be determined, but no pathological process was demonstrated on the bone. This suggests that it may have been more likely a punishment or a consequence of a war injury.

In Prušánky, grave 138, the skeleton also belonged to a 40–50-year-old man. His right leg was amputated at the distal end of both tibia bones (*Vyhnánek/Hanáková 1988*, 211, 212). A similarly aged man was also discovered in grave 56 in Rajhrad. He had both upper limbs amputated at the forearm (*Hanáková/Staňa/Stloukal 1986*, 67).

All of the above amputations occurred in males. This is not a surprising finding because the latter were involved in fighting and were also more often judicially punished. What is interesting is the age consistency in all individuals. All were between 40 and 50 years old at the time of death. No exact cause could be identified for any of the amputations. In the case of the individual from grave 78, the cross-amputation is probably the result of punishment. In the other individuals, the injury may also have occurred in combat. The healed fracture of both forearms of the individual from Klášterisko could indicate this. Perhaps a similar injury, but with a worse healing process, massive bleeding, etc., could have resulted in the amputation of both arms in the Rajhrad man. Unfortunately, we do not have any confirmed cases of amputation in this way in Slovakia. Missing parts of the upper or lower limbs have been found in several graves (e.g. in graves 13, 27, and 37 at the burial site in Bučany; *Hanuliak 1993*, 85). However, without anthropological assessment, it is impossible to conclude whether at least some of the cases may have been amputated.

Punishments in the form of severing limbs have been known since the Roman Empire when hands were cut off from soldiers who refused to fight. According to a report from the *Annals of Fulda*, Svätopluk had his prisoners' hands amputated (*Unger 2006*, 159).

The binding of the lower limbs could be indicated by the crossing of the lower limbs (*Prokeš 2007*, 27). It occurred in 11 cases. In one case, the description of the skeleton indicated that it had been decapitated, which could indicate the burial of a convict. In most cases, no other bones had been moved or disturbed, so it is likely that the legs had already been positioned in this way at the time of burial. In three cases women were buried in this way (also in the case of the decapitated skeleton it was a woman) and in one a child. Males have not been documented.

CONCLUSION

Atypical graves in the Early Middle Ages represent a considerably heterogeneous group in Slovakia, but also in the territory of Europe, which has recently attracted the attention of researchers from many countries (e.g. *Čulíková 2011*; *Gardeła 2011*; *2017*; *Hanuliak 2020*; *Krupičková/Válová 2011*; *Reynolds 2009*; *Štefan 2009*), who are reassessing their

[12] This is how *P. Mašková* (*2004*) reassesed interpretation of Čelákovice cemetery. The site interpreted by the author of the original publication, J. Špaček, as a burial site of vampires, was, according to the compelling arguments of P. Mašková rather a place of burial of convicts.

previous interpretations. Given their considerable diversity and the absence of common denominators, these graves require an individual approach and careful consideration of their meaning and interpretation. Scientific analyses would certainly help in this, but this has not been done in a significant number of cases. Anthropological analyses that would not only determine the sex and age of an individual, but could also detect possible pathologies on the skeletons, DNA analyses to determine sex in children, and more precise dating of skeletons or isotopic analyses are lacking. However, this is not only a problem for atypical graves, and thus the possibilities of processing them were limited by these circumstances. The significant fragmentation of input data is also a problem, which relativizes acquired knowledge. In the past, mainly negative reasons have been given for the existence of atypical graves, but this may not be true for all cases.

Based on current knowledge, it has not been demonstrated that atypical graves may have been used to bury, for example, physically handicapped individuals. On the contrary, in the case of the individual from Čakajovce (*Rejholcová 1995b*, 45), an effort to bury him as much as possible in accordance with custom despite his physical handicap was evident. On the other hand, if anthropological analyses had been available for a larger number of graves the situation might have been different. Also, some handicaps may not have been observable on the skeleton. The reason for the special burial of individuals may indeed have been their distinctiveness, but this was not necessarily taken as undesirable. Even digging a grave pit required a certain amount of effort, which does not indicate indifference on the part of the survivors, whatever their reasons.

In the case of individuals outside burial grounds, they may have been dangerous individuals, especially in the case of solitary graves, who may have been buried far from the living because of the potential threat they posed. However, they could also have been people who died far from home, in which case it would have been a positive effort to give the individual as adequate a burial as possible given the circumstances. Graves on settlements are no different in manner of burial from those on burial grounds and the reason for them may not have been fear of the return of the dead. Finds of skeletons in settlement features may be indicative of dramatic events, but what these were we are unable to perceive from the find situation.

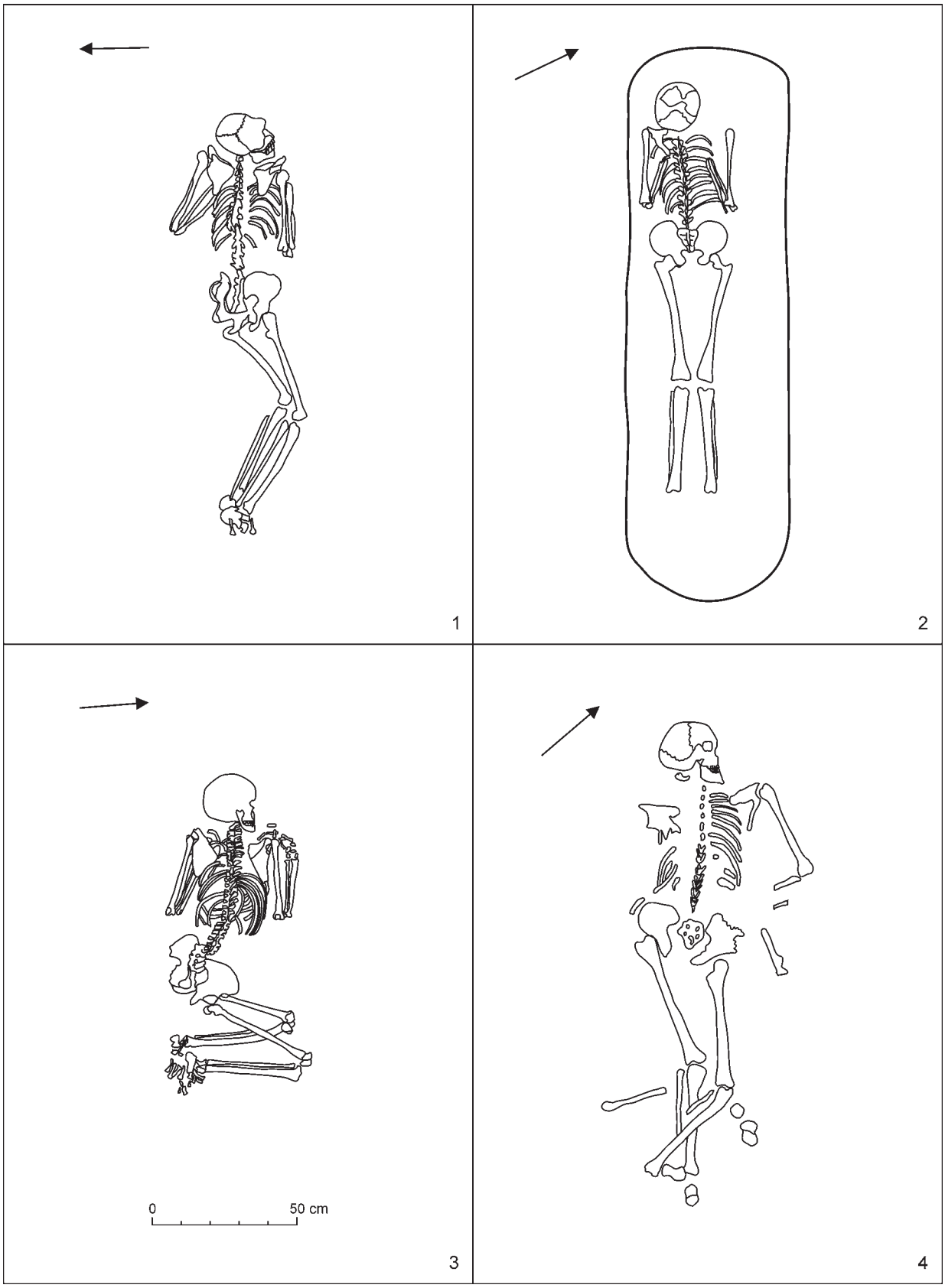
There are ample written sources on the burial of the body in the prone position as the only form, but these do not relate to the period in question. Most interpretations of this position have negative meanings. It is possible, therefore, that even though the written sources date from a later period, a negative attitude may have persisted with this position in the past. Since we do not have an individual placed on his stomach documented in a church cemetery in Slovakia, we can assume that other reasons for this action, whether it may have been a punishment or a precautionary measure, were prevalent in the recorded cases. In the case of individuals buried in the lateral position, this may have been an isolated habit of a certain population group, which may have differed either socially, ethnically, or religiously. The same is also true in the case of orientation. However, the burial of the deceased with above-standard equipment in the opposite direction from the majority in some burial sites is interesting. It would suggest a rather exclusive position for these individuals in a positive sense. In the case of posterior interventions, a large number of skeletal transformations were caused by factors that can be categorized as taphonomic processes. Skeletal movements due to the existence of primary and secondary hollow spaces, as well as the activity of animals and tree roots, fall into this category. In the past, these processes have not been given adequate attention and therefore some skeletal transformations may have been wrongly attributed to intentional design. Other intentional measures include skeletal transfers, which tend to be attributed to an apotropaic function in order to dispose of dangerous dead. This is not always the case. Movements of skulls, or their absence or absence of limbs, can also be attributed to the consequences of criminal activity, especially in the case of male skeletons. In the case of scattered bones in the grave, caution in interpretation is necessary as post-depositional processes may have played a role. This conclusion is supported by the results of the recent work of Mikulčice researchers M. Mazuch, M. Hladík, and R. Skopal, who are convinced that the majority of *'would-be secondary interventions in graves are caused by non-intentional post-inhumation transformations'* (*Mazuch/Hladík/Skopal 2017*, 303).

It should also be considered that the changes that took place during the duration of Great Moravia were not unique and isolated exclusively to this territory. There was a transformation from tribe to chiefdom, in the case of Great Moravia (*Macháček 2009*, 257–261) and in the case of western, northern and rest of central Europe continued later in the Middle Ages to the state. Although the timeframe varied within the territories, in all of them the burial ritual gradually became more unified into an inhumation rite, and also atypical graves were more common during the transition period (for

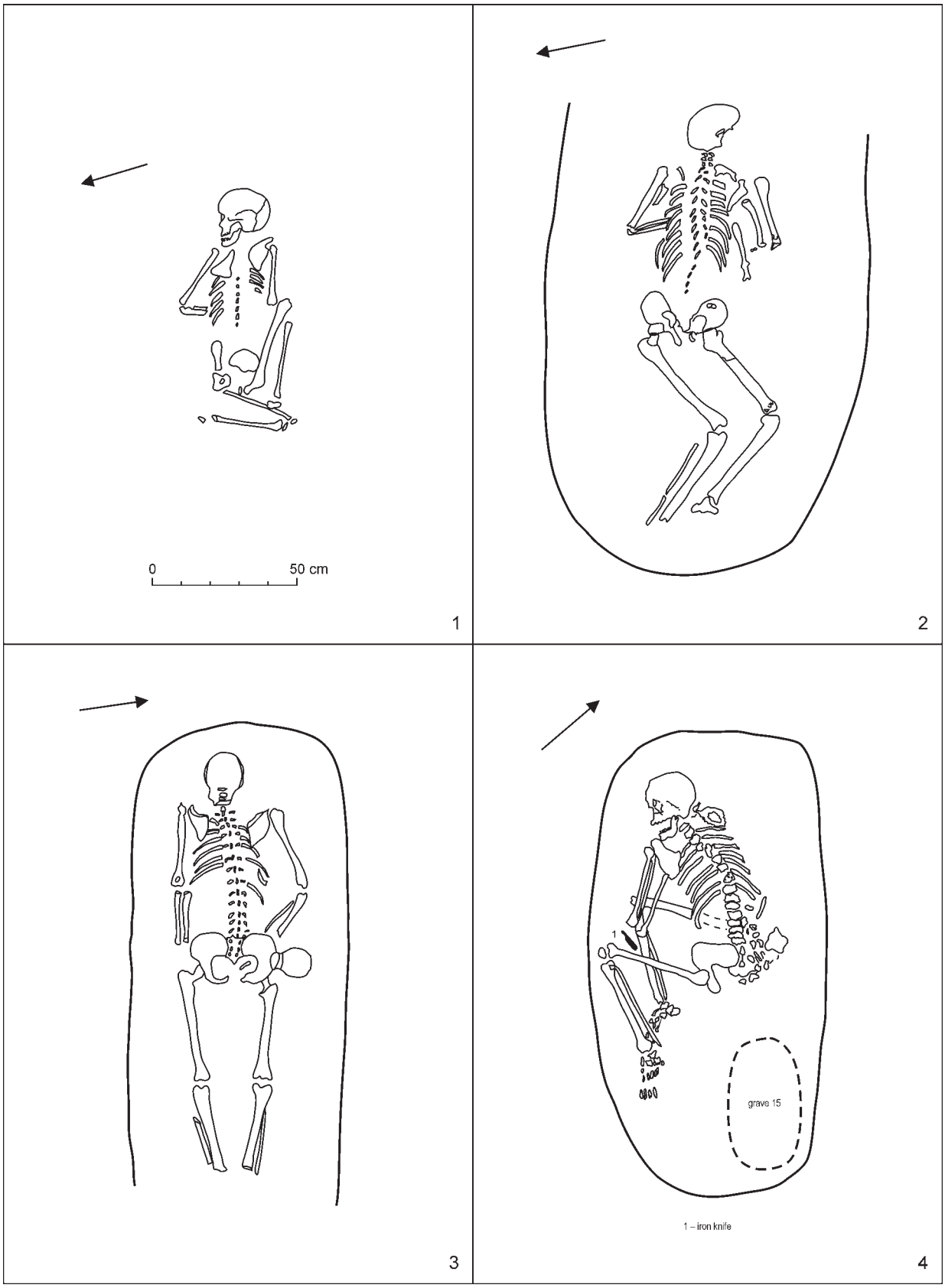
the territory of Poland more *Gardeła 2017*; England *Reynolds 2009*). This may indicate that the transformation that was taking place in society was reflected in the burial ritual, and while the society and its customs became stabilized, the burial methods also differed to an increased extent.

Anomalously buried individuals represent a category of graves that will always provoke attention and questions. They represent an attractive type of finds where different, often extreme, interpretations can be applied. They are, moreover, attractive to the public because mankind has always had a penchant for strange, thrilling, or ghostly tales. It is unusual graves that provide a suitable medium for conveying scientific knowledge to a wider audience. They attract attention for their individualism, which has recently become more and more engaging, and it can be assumed that interest in these findings will only increase. With new possibilities for their analysis, it will be possible to produce more advanced results that will refine our picture of the buried and also of the period as a whole.

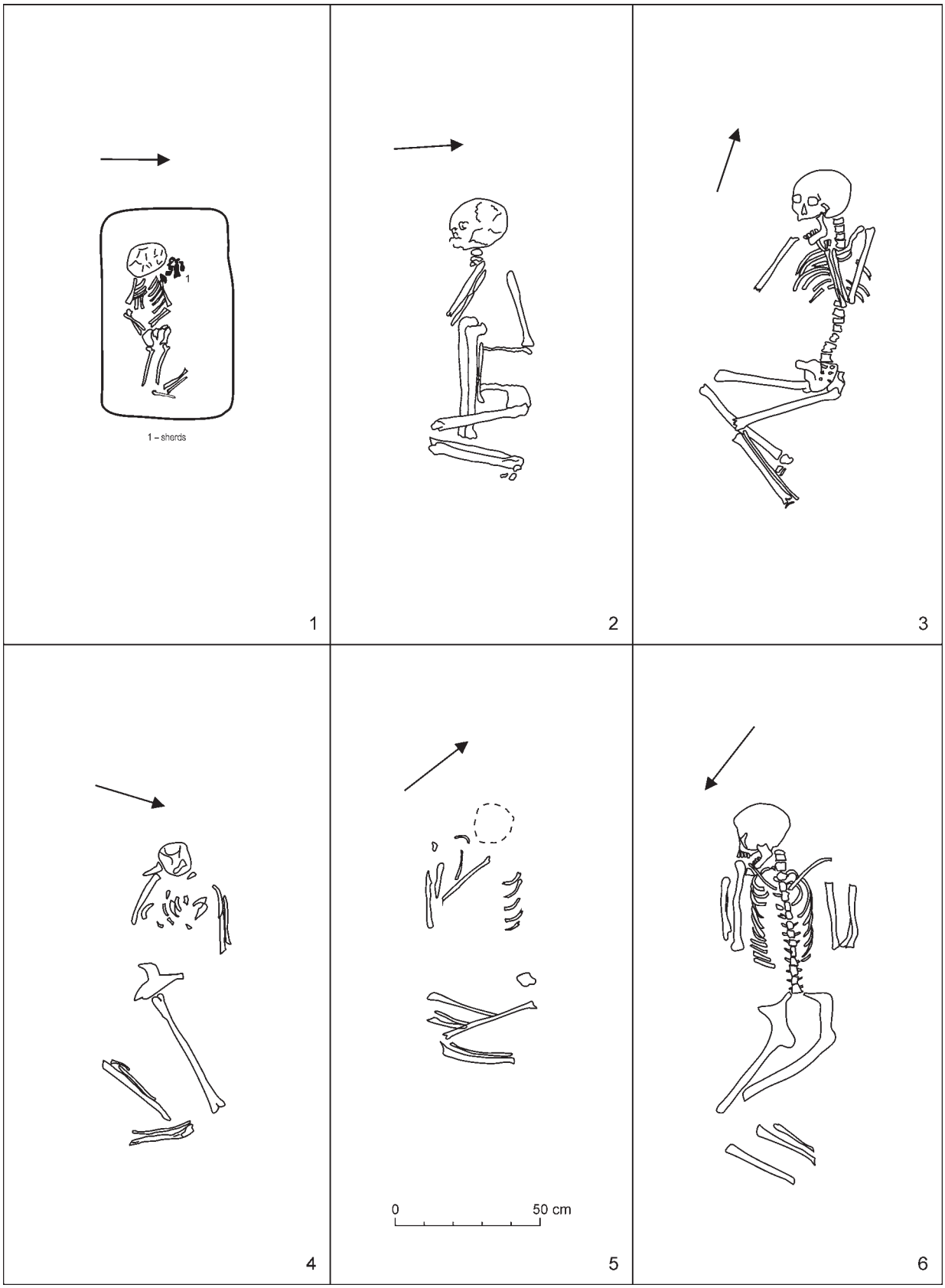
However, there will always be a real discrepancy between what we know and what actually was. This may be due both to the loss of data in the process of archaeologisation and to the impossibility of capturing the processes, rituals, and actions to which the deceased was subjected during burial. Not to mention that the very selection of artefacts, clothing, jewellery, and the like by the deceased are subject to a form of 'censorship' by the survivors. They create the image they would like others to have of the deceased, not that it is indicative of how he or she really was. It is not, after all, only a matter of the past. By analysing tombstones in the present, archaeologists of the future might think that there is a civilization of saints living in the present who all deserve to rest in peace.



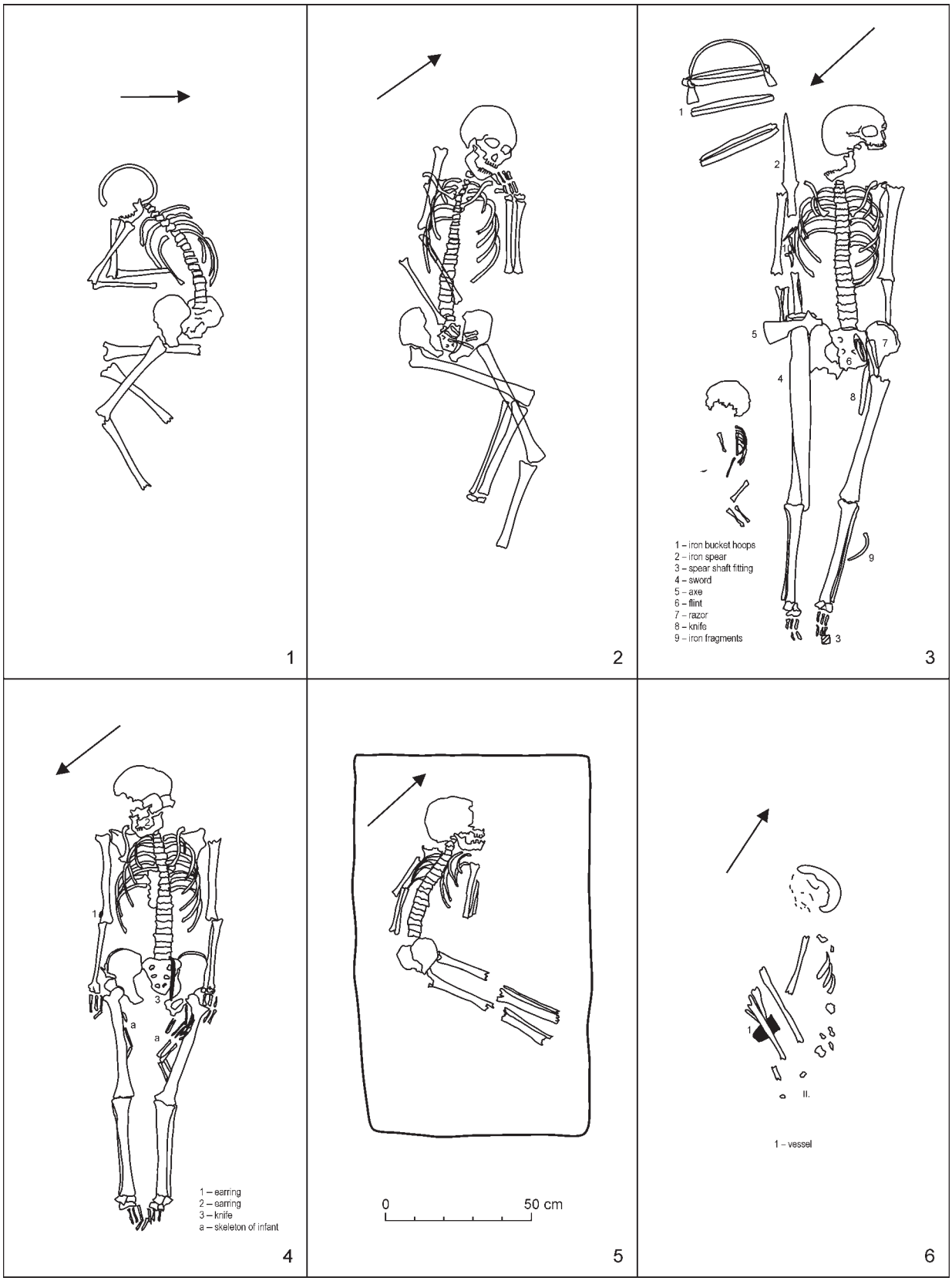
Pl. I. Graves of individuals in a prone position. 1 – Nitra-Pod Zoborom, grave 34 (according to *Chropovský 1974*); 2 – Malé Kosihy, grave 215 (according to *Hanuliak 1986*); 3 – Pobedim, grave 53 (according to *Vendtová 1966*); 4 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 301 (according to *Rajček 1955*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



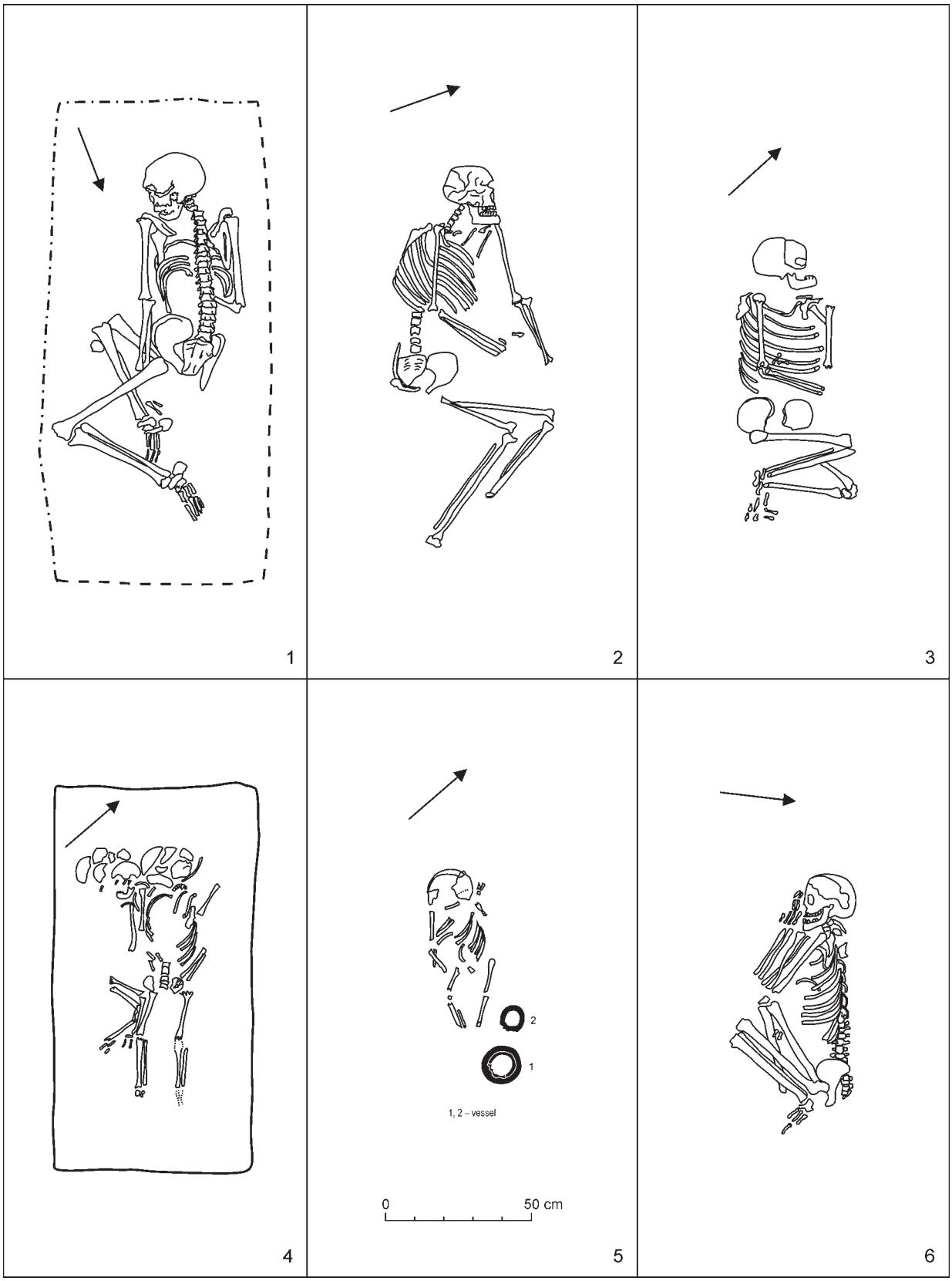
Pl. II. Graves of individuals in prone and lateral positions. 1 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 322; 2 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 546; 3 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 548 (1–3 according to *Rajček 1955*); 4 – Bešeňov-Sírdűlő, grave 15 (according to *Nevizánsky 1975*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



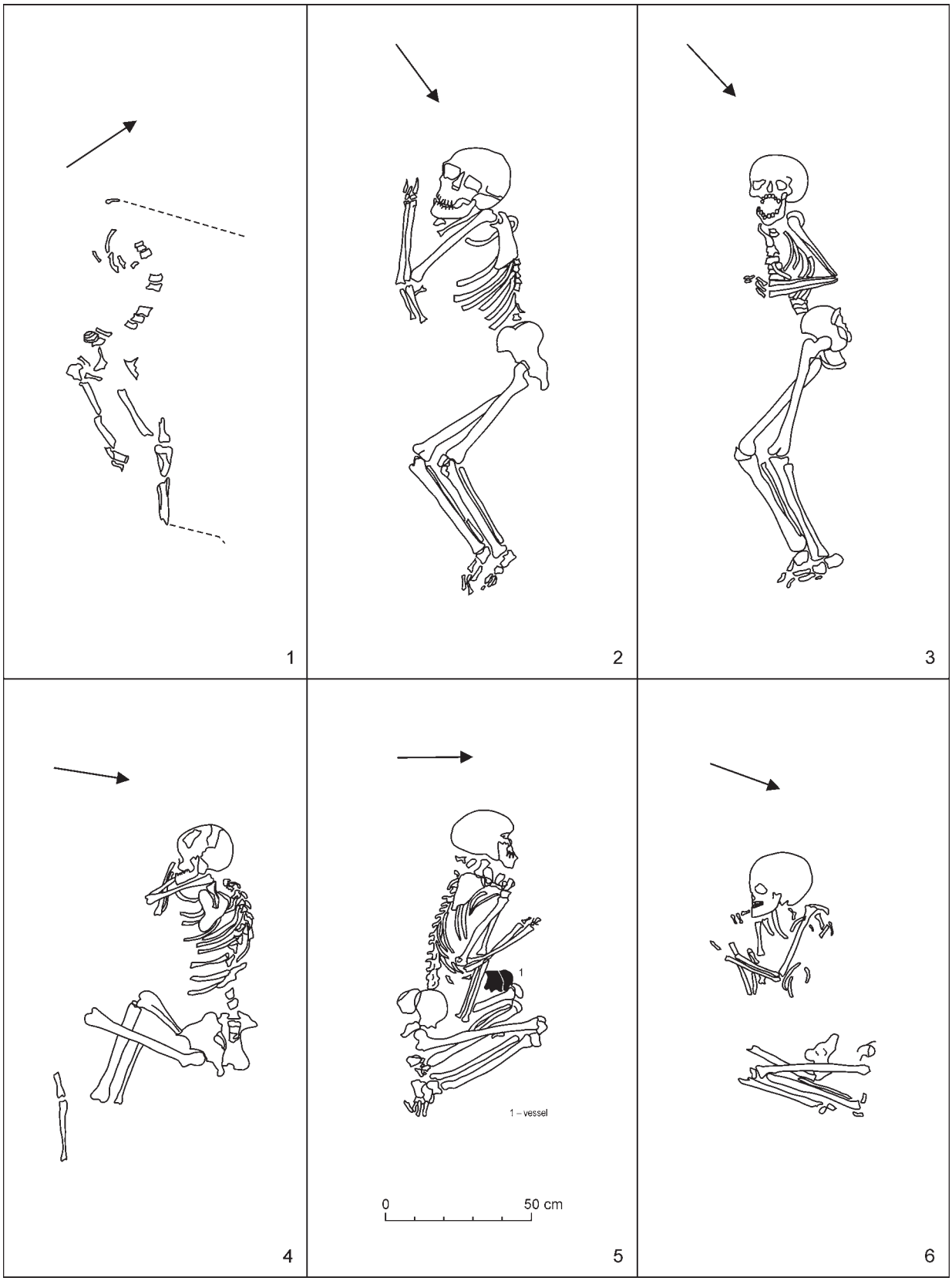
Pl. III. Graves of individuals in lateral position. 1 – Bešeňov, grave 60 (according to *Hanuliak 1977*); 2 – Bešeňov, grave 95 (according to *Nevizánsky 1978a*); 3 – Cífer-Pác, grave 8; 4 – Cífer-Pác, grave 15; 5 – Cífer-Pác, grave 21; 6 – Cífer-Pác, grave 26 (3–6 according to *Zábojník 1976*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



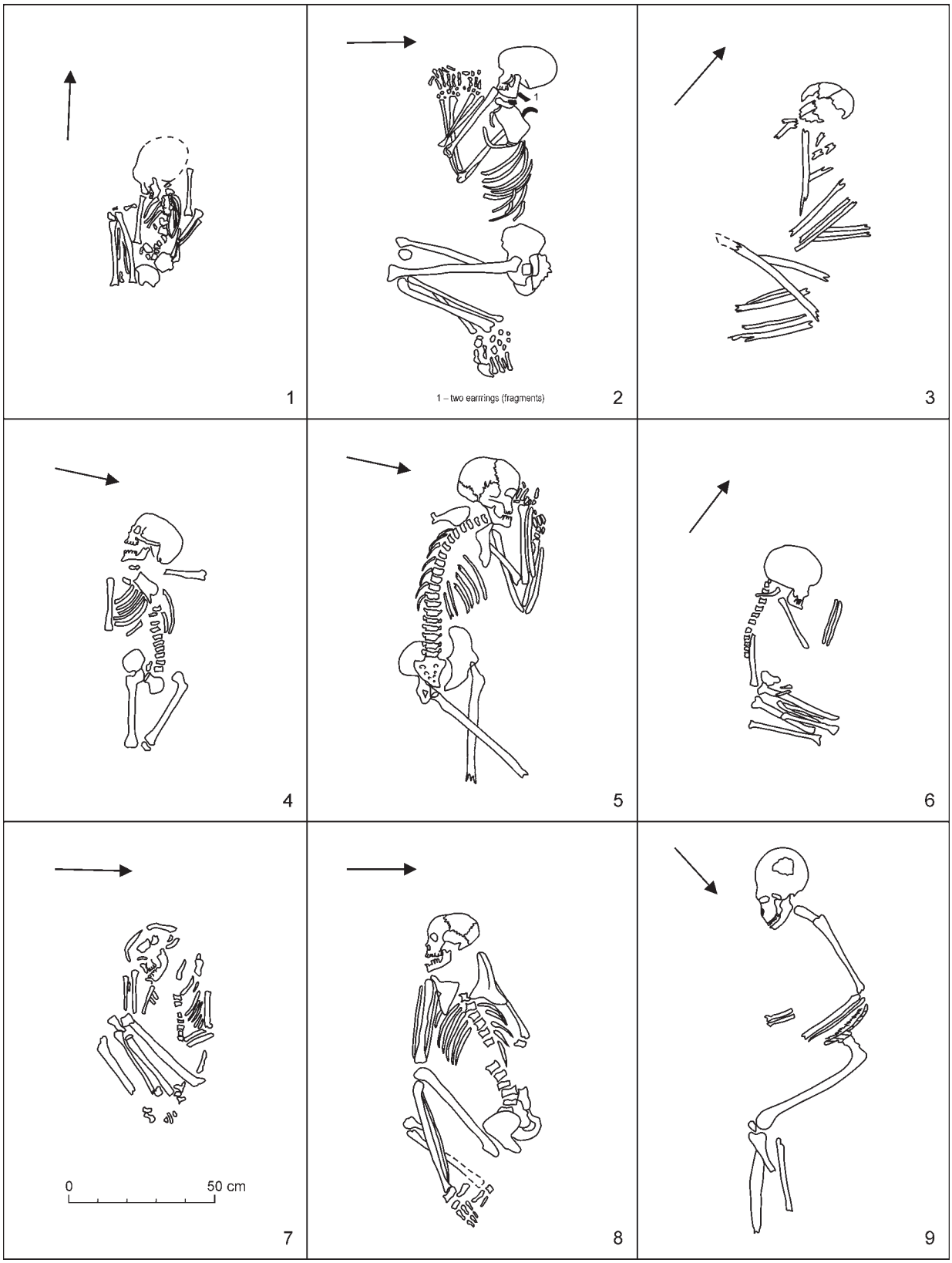
Pl. IV. Graves of individuals in lateral position. 1 – Čakajovce, grave 518 (according to *Rejholcová 1980*); 2 – Čakajovce, grave 561; 3 – Čakajovce, grave 587; 4 – Čakajovce, grave 672; 5 – Čakajovce, grave 611 (2–5 according to *Rejholcová 1981*); 6 – Hurbanovo, grave 20 (according to *Rajček 1957*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



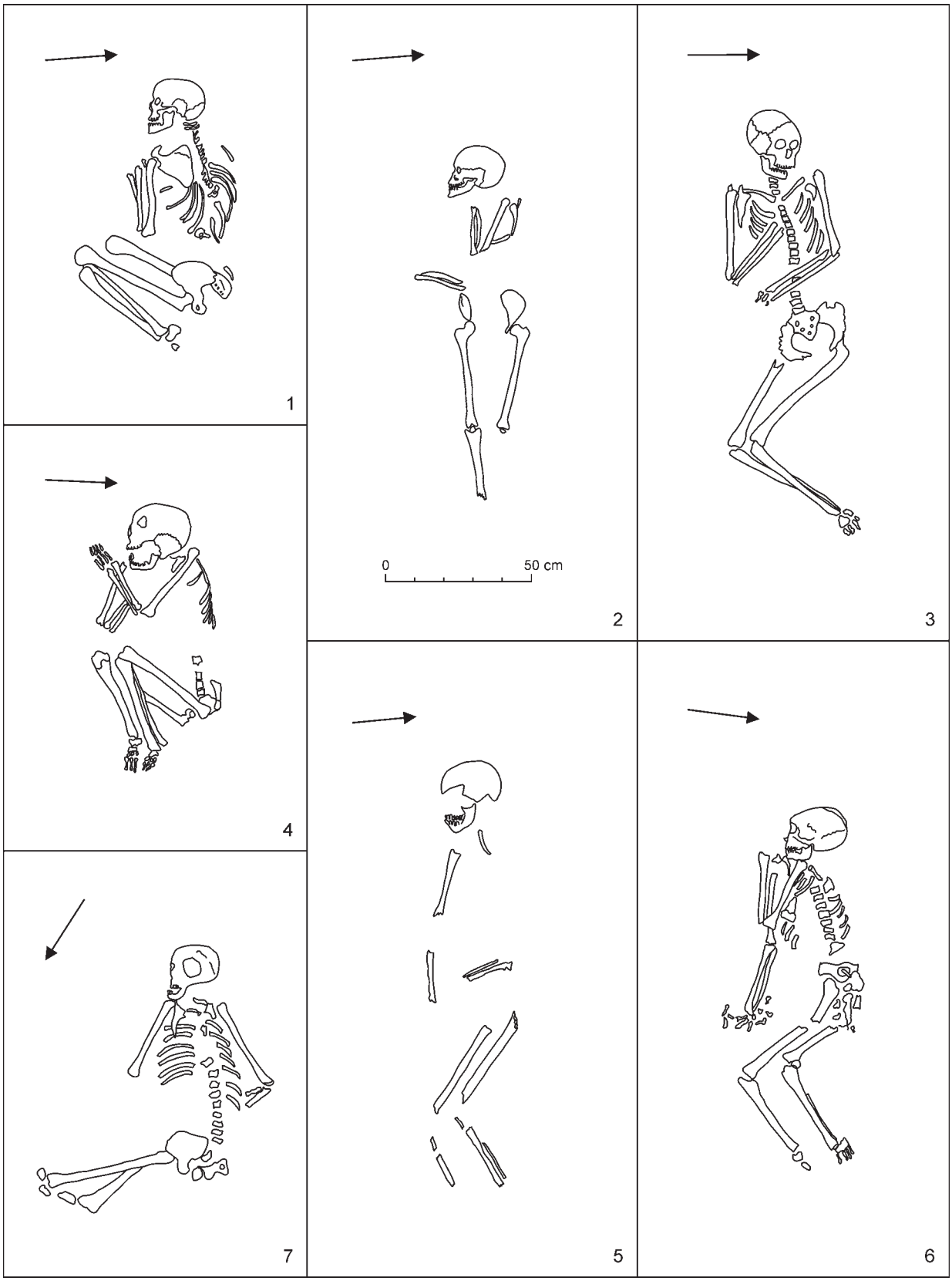
Pl. V. Graves of individuals in lateral position. 1 – Lefantovce, grave 10 (according to *Rejholcová 1989*); 2 – Malé Kosihy, grave 90 (according to *Hanuliak 1986*); 3 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 35; 4 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 55; 5 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 90 (3–5 according to *Chropovský 1968*); 6 – Nitra-Horné Krškany, grave 85 (according to *Chropovský 1979*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



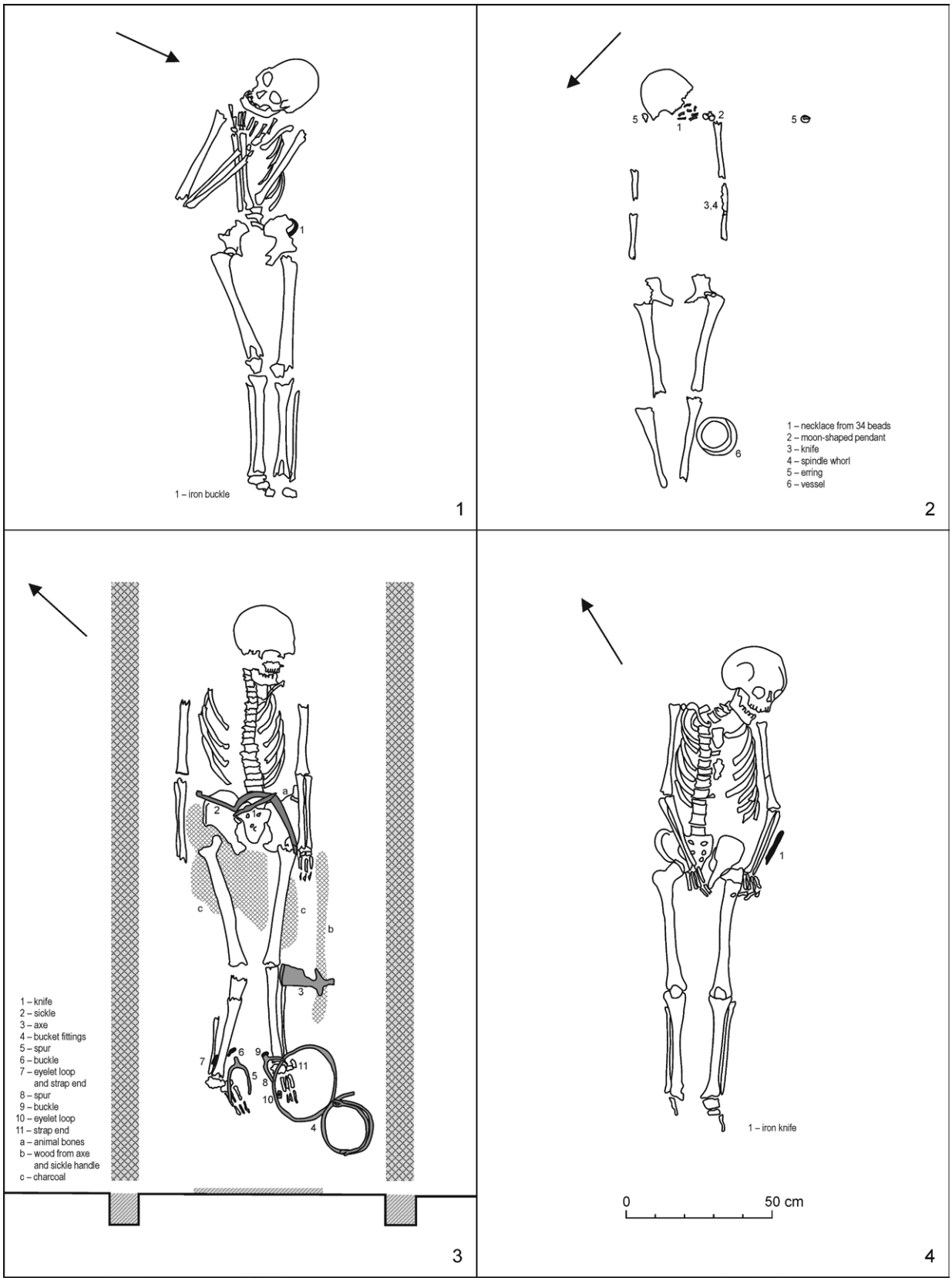
Pl. VI. Graves of individuals in lateral position. 1 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, grave 26; 2 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, grave 39; 3 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, grave 45; 4 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, grave 50 (1–4 according to *Chropovský 1974*); 5 – Pobedim-Na laze, grave 20; 6 – Pobedim-Na laze, grave 33 (5, 6 according to *Vendtová 1966*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



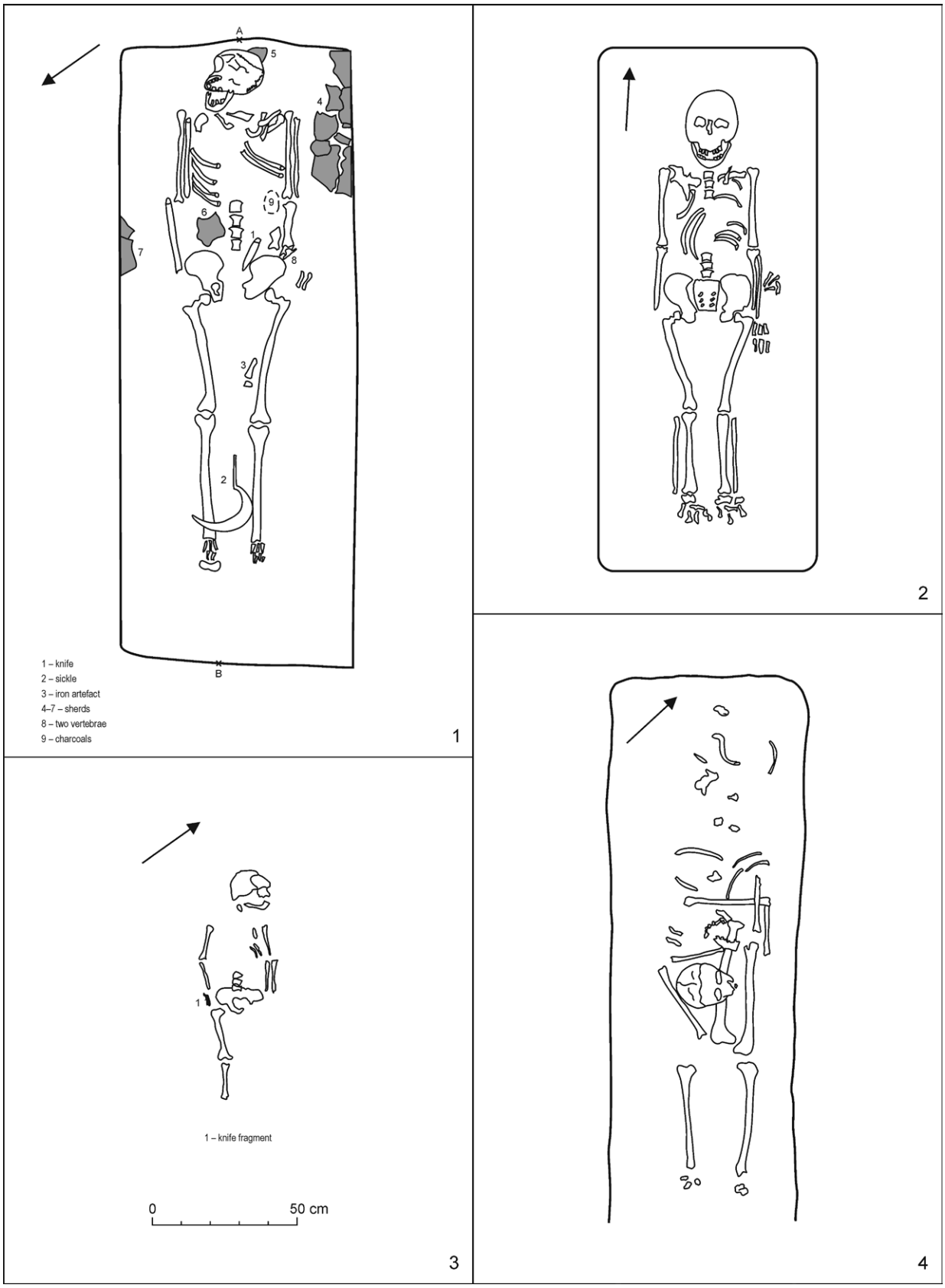
Pl. VII. Graves of individuals in lateral position. 1 – Pobedim-Na laze, grave 108; 2 – Pobedim-Na laze, grave 112 (1, 2 according to *Vendtová 1966*); 3 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 75; 4 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 115; 5 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 129; 6 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 154; 7 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 158; 8 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 169; 9 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 261 (3–9 according to *Rajček 1955*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



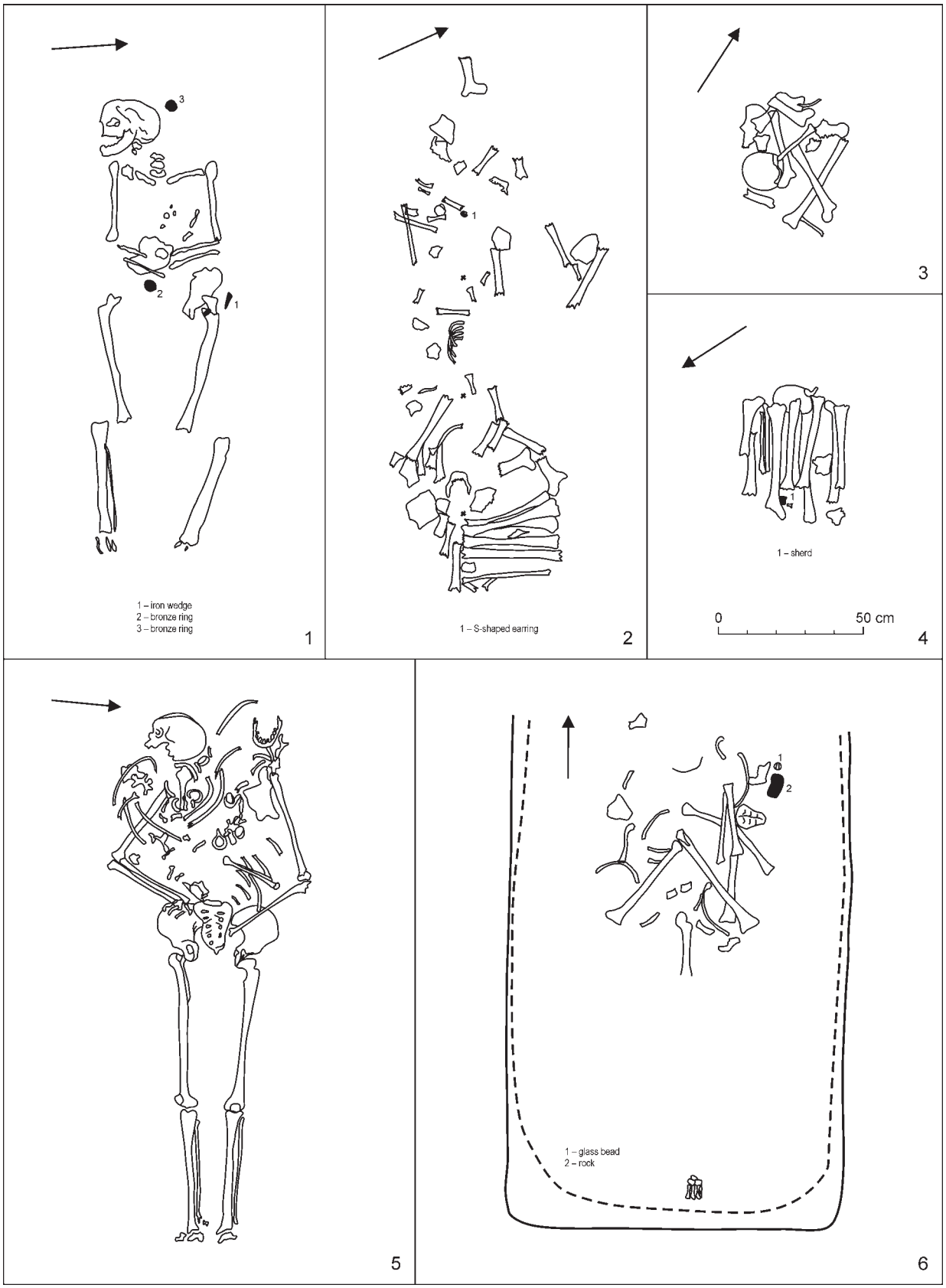
Pl. VIII. Trnovec nad Váhom. Graves of individuals in lateral position. 1 – grave 264; 2 – grave 291; 3 – grave 340; 4 – grave 420; 5 – grave 456; 6 – grave 503; 7 – grave 513 (according to *Rajček 1955*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



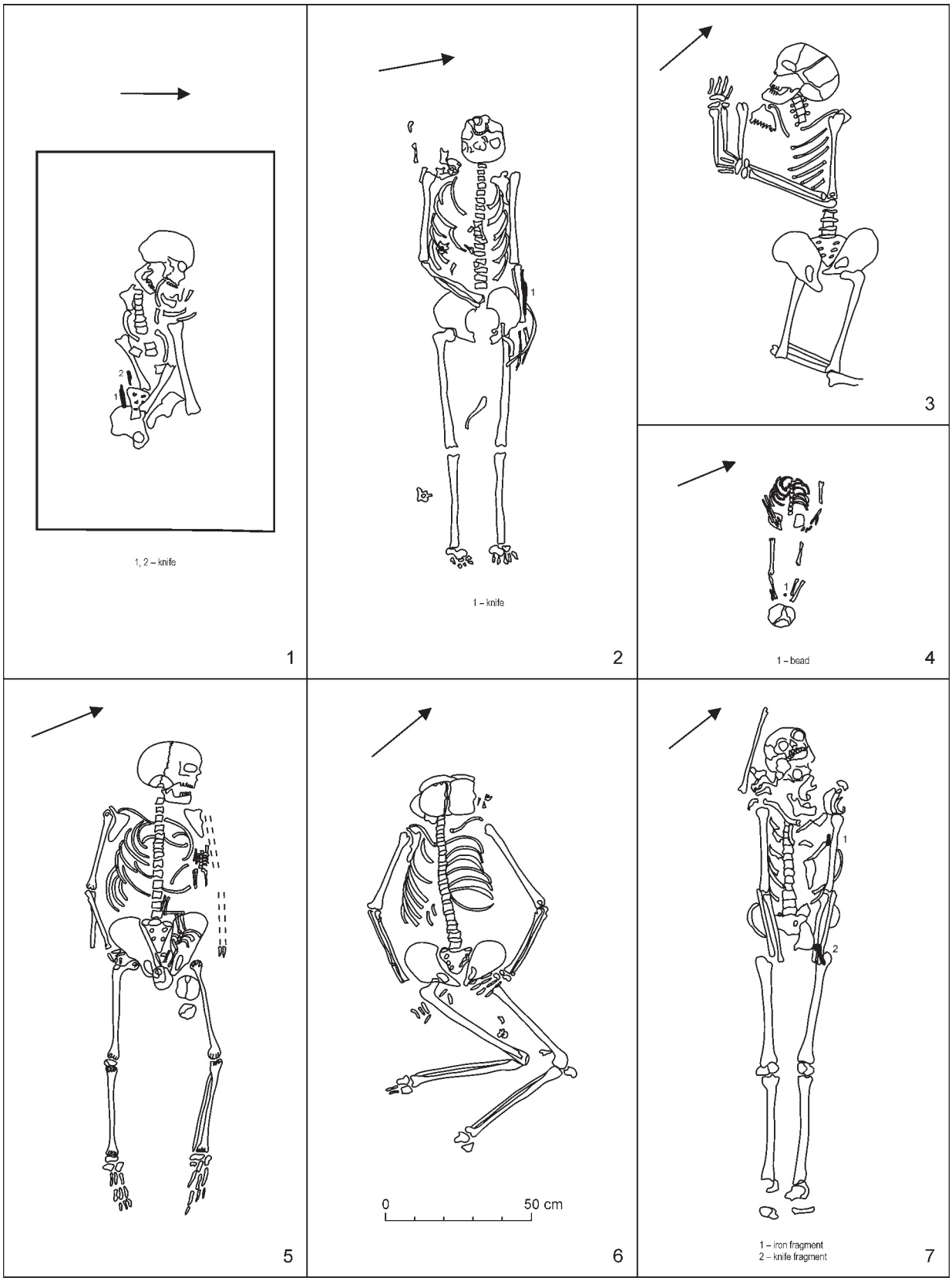
Pl. IX. Graves of individuals in sitting position and graves with atypical orientation. 1 – Čakajovce, grave 415 (according to *Rejholcová 1980*); 2 – Čakajovce, grave 226 (according to *Rejholcová 1978b*); 3 – Čakajovce, grave 788 (according to *Rejholcová 1983b*); 4 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, grave 42 (according to *Chropovský 1974*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



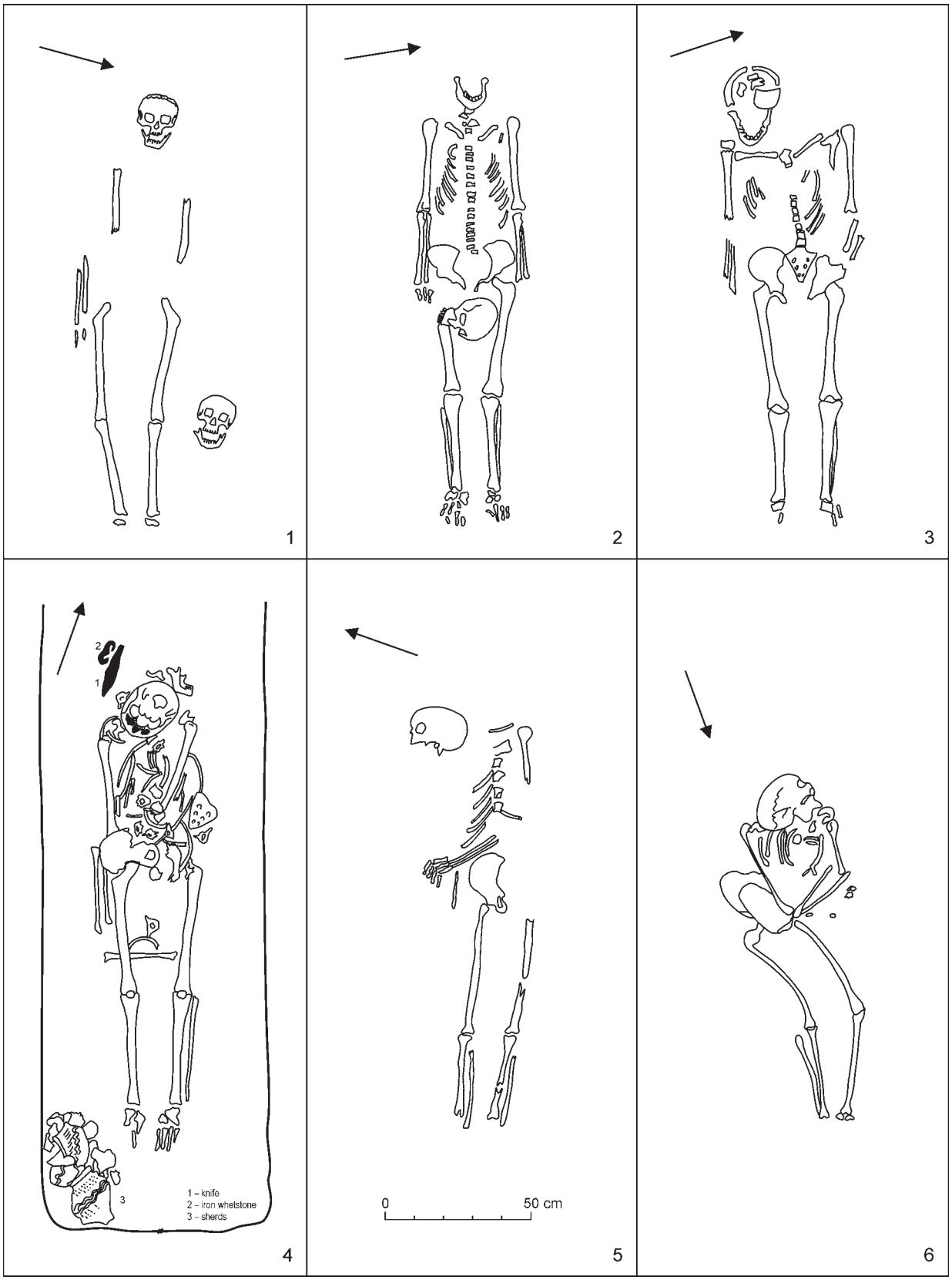
Pl. X. Graves of individuals with atypical orientation and with posterior interventions. 1 – Veľký Grob, grave 87; 2 – Veľký Grob, grave 101 (1, 2 according to *Chropovský 1955*); 3 – Bešeňov, grave 2; 4 – Bešeňov, grave 6 (3, 4 according to *Nevizánsky 1975*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



Pl. XI. Graves with posterior interventions. 1 – Bešeňov, grave 80 (according to *Nevizánsky 1978a*); 2 – Čakajovce, grave 30; 3 – Čakajovce, grave 53 (2, 3 *according to Rejholcová 1974*); 4 – Čakajovce, grave 82 (according to *Rejholcová 1977*); 5 – Lipová-Ondrochov, grave 2/57; 6 – Lipová-Ondrochov, grave 4/57 (5, 6 according to *Rejholcová 1958*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



Pl. XII. Graves with posterior interventions. 1 – Lipová-Ondrochov, grave 30/57 (according to *Rejholcová 1958*); 2 – Malé Kosihy, grave 38 (according to *Hanuliak 1986*); 3 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 1; 4 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 44; 5 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 19; 6 – Nitra-Lupka, grave 41 (3–6 according to *Chropovský 1968*); 7 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, grave 28 (according to *Chropovský 1974*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.



Pl. XIII. Graves with posterior interventions. 1 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 122; 2 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 255; 3 – Trnovec nad Váhom, grave 290 (1–3 according to *Rajček 1955*); 4 –Veľký Grob, grave 83; 5 – Veľký Grob, grave 102; 6 – Veľký Grob, grave 129 (4–6 according to *Chropovský 1955*). Redrawn by E. Červeňová.

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Atypické hroby z včasného stredoveku na území západného Slovenska

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SÚHRN

Vo včasnom stredoveku prichádza v stredoeurópskom priestore k plošnej zmene pohrebného rítu. Na územiach, kde sa predtým pochovávalo žiarovo, sa pohrebný rítus mení na inhumačný. V nížinných oblastiach západného Slovenska (v priestore Podunajskej nížiny) sa inhumačne pochovávalo prevažne na tzv. plochých pohrebiskách. Mŕtvi boli ukladaní do hrobových jám otočení hlavou smerom na západ a nohami na východ. Ukladaní boli vo vystretej polohe na chrbte, s rukami pozdĺž tela a natiahnutými nohami. Táto poloha bola typická pre celú včasnostredovekú Európu (*Unger 2006*, 43).

Avšak popri týchto hroboch, ktoré tvoria väčšinu, sa vyskytujú aj také, ktoré sa odlišujú od tohto spôsobu pochovávania. V minulosti boli mnohé z týchto odchýlok dávané do súvislosti s protivampirickými opatreniami, resp. strachom z nemŕtvych (*Aspöck 2008*, 21; *Hanuliak 1998*; *Krumphanzlová 1961*; *1964*). Množstvo atypických hrobov klesá s prechodom na pochovávanie na kostolných cintorínoch, ktoré sa završuje v 12. stor. (*Unger 2006*, 59).

Atypické hroby, resp. atypické pochovávanie môže byť rozdelené na dve základné skupiny. Prvú tvoria jedinci nájdení mimo súvekých pohrebísk, nemusia byť dokonca uložení ani v hrobových jamách, ale v objektoch s pôvodne inou funkciou. Do tejto skupiny patria aj osamotené hroby a hroby na sídliskách. Do druhej skupiny spadajú jedinci, ktorí síce boli nájdení na regulárnych pohrebiskách, ale poloha alebo orientácia ich tela sa vymyká z prevažujúcej. Ide o jedincov uložených na boku alebo bruchu, v severojužných alebo východozápadných smeroch, či takých, na ktorých boli pozorované posteriórne zásahy.

Osamotené hroby sú známe z rôznych období, nielen zo včasného stredoveku. V ideálnom prípade je ako osamotený hrob možné klasifikovať taký nález, v ktorom bol nájdený jedinec preukázateľne datovaný do skúmaného obdobia, pričom v jeho okolí neboli nájdené žiadne iné súveké nálezy. Osamotených hrobov bolo na sledovanom území zaznamenaných 15. Podľa mapy (obr. 1) sú rozmiestené v okrajových oblastiach Podunajskej nížiny, avšak ich rozmiestnenie sa čiastočne prekrýva s inými lokalitami s anomálnymi hrobmi a nielen s nimi (pre porovnanie *Hanuliak 2004*, obr. 37). Aj keď osamotené hroby neposkytujú dostatok informácií na ich uspokojivú interpretáciu, je potrebné upozorniť na tento fenomén. Keďže predstavujú súčasť dobového pohrebného rítu, je nutné s nimi počítať s nádejou, že v budúcnosti sa budú aplikovať metódy, ktoré novým nálezom prinesú viac informácií alebo sa snáď prikročí aspoň k analýze starších nálezov. Keď už pre nič iné, treba ich brať na vedomie kvôli tomu, že môžu indikovať prítomnosť ďalších hrobov alebo osídlenia a tým upozorniť na nové lokality.

Nálezy skeletov na sídlisku sú pomerne časté. Jedincov z tejto skupiny môžeme rozdeliť na dve podskupiny, podľa toho v akom type objektu boli nájdení. Prvú skupinu tvoria nebohí pochovaní na sídlisku, no v regulárnej hrobovej jame. Druhú predstavujú jedinci nájdení v sídliskových objektoch.

Na území Slovenska bolo takto zdokumentovaných 66 hrobov na 11 sídliskách (Branč, Čataj, Igram, Ludanice, Mužla-Čenkov-Orechový sad, Mužla-Čenkov-Vilmakert, Nitra-Chrenová, Nitra-Martinský vrch, Nitra-Staré mesto, Šurany-Nitriansky Hrádok a Veľký Kýr). Najviac hrobov, v počte 30, bolo preskúmaných na sídlisku v Mužle-Čenkove, poloha Vilmakert, čím sa táto lokalita stáva najvýraznejším reprezentantom tejto kategórie hrobov. Je nutné spomenúť, že na lokalite sa taktiež preskúmalo pohrebisko s regulárnymi hrobmi a jedinci boli objavení aj v sídliskových objektoch. Obdobná situácia je aj na polohe Orechový sad, kde boli popri deviatich jedincoch pochovaných v sídliskovom areáli identifikované aj tri pohrebiská a jeden jedinec v sídliskovom objekte.

Podľa zistených informácií hroby nájdené v areáli sídlisk nevykazujú odlišnosti od hrobov vykopaných na mieste regulárneho pohrebiska. Je preto otázne, čo viedlo komunitu k takémuto výberu miesta posledného odpočinku pochovaného, najmä ak vieme, že nablízku boli v tom čase súveké pohrebiská. Ich výbava, poloha, orientácia a absencia posteriórnych opatrení vo väčšine prípadov nenaznačuje, že by u týchto jedincov bol dôvod, prečo by mali byť pochovaní mimo zaužívaného priestoru.

Zaujímavú interpretáciu k javu pochovávania zomrelých v sídliskových areáloch poskytuje *J. Unger* (*2010*, 166). Podľa jeho názoru sa prijatie kresťanstva prejavuje aj presunom pohrebísk do intravilánu a to nielen do blízkosti kostolov, ale aj dvorcov. Tieto procesy boli doložené v Nemecku. Obdobná situácia mohla nastať aj na lokalite Břeclav-Pohansko, kde sa v rozptýlených skupinkách a ojedinelých hroboch v rámci fungujúceho sídliska mali pochovávať hlavne ľudia, ktorí sa už vymanili z rodovej komunity a začlenili sa do štruktúr nového štátu. Analogické vysvetlenie môžeme aplikovať aj v prípade lokality Mužla-Čenkov. *J. Unger* (*2010*, 167) ponúka aj iné vysvetlenia tohto javu. Pre rozhodnutie pozostalých pochovať zomrelého v rámci areálu sídliska mohla zohrávať určitú úlohu aj celospoločenská situácia. Takýmto spôsobom mohli byť pochovaní ľudia v čase vojnového konfliktu. Ak boli obyvatelia lokality ohrození potenciálnym vojskom, mohlo sa stať, že pochovávanie na zvyčajnom mieste bolo znemožnené práve kvôli hroziacemu nebezpečenstvu. Pochovanie na ploche sídliska by bolo provizórnym krízovým riešením.

Čo sa týka lokalít Mužla Čenkov a priestoru Nitry-Starého Mesta, podobná situácia je aj na moravskej lokalite Břeclav-Pohansko. Tu sa taktiež nachádzajú hroby v menších,

či väčších skupinkách alebo osamotene v rámci sídlisk a okrem toho tu boli objavené aj dva kostolné cintoríny (*Přichystalová 2018*, 47). Autorka predpokladá, že zatiaľ čo pochovávanie na kostolných cintorínoch muselo byť centrálne riadené a plánované, pri ostatných hroboch v rámci areálu je väčšia variabilita, ktorá bola spôsobená menej homogénnym náboženským, sociálnym a možno aj etnickým zázemím pochovávaných, ktoré sa odrážalo aj v necentralizovanom usporiadaní pohrebných areálov (*Přichystalová 2018*, 60). To mohol byť aj prípad opevneného sídliska v Mužle-Čenkove, ktorého väčšia vzdialenosť od centrálnych lokalít a pozícia na okraji ríše mohla túto diverzitu ešte posilňovať.

Jedinci nájdení v sídliskových objektoch tvoria značne heterogénnu skupinu, v ktorej sa len ťažko hľadajú spoločné znaky, ktoré by ich spájali. V záujmovej oblasti bolo doposiaľ doložených 65 jedincov v sídliskových objektoch 21 lokalít. Je tiež otázne, či ich uloženie vôbec môžeme považovať za akúsi formu pohrebu a či ich môžeme klasifikovať ako pochovaných jedincov, keďže zaobchádzanie s týmito telami svedčí často o ľahostajnosti, až pohŕdaní ostatkami.

Jedinci boli ukladaní v heterogénnych typoch sídliskových objektov. Dominovali zásobné jamy, a to buď hruškovitého (7 prípadov) alebo valcovitého prierezu (8 prípadov). Taktiež sa vyskytli prípady, v ktorých boli zomrelí pochovaní v objektoch s obytnou funkciou (Palárikovo; *Hanuliak 1997*, 163). Ľudské skelety boli nájdené aj v studňovitej jame (Bratislava-Ventúrska ulica; *Vallašek 1972*, 246). Niektoré objekty boli využité na pochovávanie krátko potom ako skončila ich primárna funkcia, iné boli už čiastočne zasypané a dlhšie neplnili svoju pôvodnú funkciu.

U jedincov, ktorí zomreli na hradiskách v priestore vnútri opevnenia, je nutné uvažovať o možnosti, že ich nebolo možné pochovať na pohrebisku z dôvodu bezprostredného ohrozenia živých. Môžu to dosvedčovať aj nálezy z Mužly-Čenkova, ktoré podľa najnovšej interpretácie M. Hanuliaka (*Hanuliak/Kuzma 2015*, 129), pochádzajú z jedného časového úseku, ktorý korešponduje s obdobím zániku Veľkej Moravy. Mohlo teda ísť o obete niektorého z bojových stretov, ku ktorým v tomto období nepochybne dochádzalo.

Niektorí jedinci mohli byť obeťami vraždy a pohodenie ich tela predstavovalo spôsob, ako sa ho nenápadne zbaviť. Netýka sa to len dospelých, ale aj novorodencov. V zaznamenaných prípadoch však nebolo možné identifikovať potenciálne obete.

Na pohrebiskách zaznamenávame jedincov uložených v nezvyčajnej polohe, netypickej orientácii alebo so stopami po posteriórnych zásahoch. Na Slovensku sa tieto hroby vyskytli na 43 lokalitách, pričom pre porovnanie, do roku 2004 bolo zaznamenaných 275 pohrebísk datovaných do 9. a 10 stor. (*Hanuliak 2004*, 27) s 3410 plochými hrobmi.

V polohe na bruchu boli uložení 12 jedinci, z toho len na troch pohrebiskách (troch evidujeme v Bratislave-Devíne; *Plachá/Hlavicová/Keller 1990* a Borovciach; *Staššíková-Štukovská 1986* a štyroch v Trnovci nad Váhom; *Točík 1971*, tab. I; II) sa našiel viac ako jeden takýto skelet. Medzi anomálnymi hrobmi tvoria najmenej početnú skupinu. Vzhľadom na to, že s pochovaním jedinca v polohe na bruchu ako spôsobom pokánia by sme mohli počítať hlavne v spoločnostiach, kde bolo kresťanstvo pevnejšie ukotvené, respektíve by bolo pravdepodobnejšie, že takéhoto jedinca nájdeme na kostolných cintorínoch, môžeme v prípade nálezov zo Slovenska skôr rátať s negatívnymi príčinami pochovania týchto jedincov. Aj keď nemuselo ísť o preventívny prostriedok voči návratu zosnulého späť zo záhrobia, mohol byť takýto spôsob pochovania formou trestu. Napriek tomu, že sa títo jedinci mohli prehrešiť, ostali stále pochovaní na spoločnom cintoríne a neboli teda po smrti úplne vylúčení zo svojho spoločenstva.

Na Slovensku bolo 63 zomrelých pochovaných v polohe na boku, je to teda o niečo väčší počet ako v prípade polohy na bruchu. Tak, ako v prípade jedincov na bruchu, je táto poloha pripisovaná potenciálne nebezpečným nebohým, ktorí mohli škodiť živým (*Hanuliak 1998*, 102). Pri polohe na boku (tab. II–VIII) nevystúpili do popredia žiadne faktory umožňujúce postrehnúť určité tendencie pri pochovávaní jedincov v tejto polohe. Snáď je to spôsobené tým, že poloha na boku vykazuje veľkú variabilitu, a to, čo by jeden autor mohol označiť ako zomrelého v polohe na boku, by druhý autor klasifikoval ako polohu štandardnú, avšak mierne vychýlenú. Často tiež nie je možné posúdiť, či posun kostry nemohol nastať aj v dôsledku tafonomických procesov. Absencia údajov o miere skrčenosti jedinca nám tiež mnohokrát neumožňuje rozlíšiť jednotlivcov pochovaných vo vystretej polohe na boku a skrčencov na boku, medzi ktorými by snáď bolo možné vysledovať rozdiely.

Na pohrebiskách sa vyskytli aj jedinci uložení v odlišných pozíciách. Tieto sa však vyskytujú skutočne len ojedinele. Svedčia o tom, že pohrebný rítus mohol byť v období Veľkej Moravy ešte pestrejší ako sa javí.

Odchýlky v orientácii sa v porovnaní s nezvyčajnými polohami vyskytujú na pohrebiskách častejšie. Hroby s odlišnou orientáciou sa nachádzajú aj na pohrebiskách, na ktorých zomrelí pochovaní v atypickej pozícii tela nie sú evidovaní. V prípade odlišnej orientácie sa rozlišujú dve základné odchýlky. Menej početná je orientácia v južných a severných smeroch, pri ktorej sú hroby orientované naprieč k všeobecnému smeru pochovávania a u ktorých musel byť odlišný spôsob uloženia tela plánovaný už pri jej samotnom výkope. Častejšie sú registrované východné smery, tvoriace najpočetnejšiu z odchýlok pri ukladaní zomrelého do hrobu a výrazne prevažujú nad pochovanými v atypickej polohe, ako aj jedincami uloženými v severných a južných smeroch. V smere S – J, J – S a priľahlých azimutoch bolo pochovaných 65 jedincov. V polohe tela jedincov dominovalo zvyčajné uloženie na chrbte, ktoré sa zistilo v 34 prípadoch. V smere V – Z a priľahlých azimutoch bolo pochovaných 159 jedincov na 29 lokalitách. Zaujímavé je v tomto smere pohrebisko v Bešeňove, poloha Papföld, kde boli takto uložení všetci jedinci (*Szőke/Nemeskéri 1954*). Na pohrebiskách v Čakajovciach a vo Veľkom Grobe boli v opačnom smere uložení jedinci v nadštandardne veľkých hrobových jamách a niektoré mali nadštandardnú výbavu (*Chropovský 1957*, 183, 185; *Rejholcová 1995a*, 8). V tomto prípade je možné premýšľať nad hypotézou, že títo jedinci tiež patrili k okrajovej skupine, ale k takej, ktorá sa nachádzala na „pozitívnom" okraji spoločnosti. Aj bohato vybavený hrob muža v Čakajovciach (hrob 788; tab. IX: 3; *Rejholcová 1995b*, 88), považovaný za najstarší inhumačný na pohrebisku, bol orientovaný opačne.

Posteriórne zásahy (tab. X–XIII) zistené na skeletoch v hroboch z 9.–12. stor. na sledovanom území môžeme rozdeliť na dve veľké skupiny – náhodné a zámerné. Do náhodných spadajú tie zákroky, pri ktorých hrob nebol

narušený úmyselne, ako napríklad dôsledky ťažby piesku, hliny, poľnohospodárskych prác. Za náhodný zásah je možné označiť aj porušenie staršieho hrobu pri výkope nového. Kosti boli v takomto prípade ako súčasť pietneho jednania zhrnuté na kôpku alebo odsunuté na bok k stene hrobu. Pod zámerné zásahy môžu spadať aj recentné činnosti ako napríklad činnosť detektoristov. Výsledkom intencionálneho zásahu bolo zámerné porušenie skeletu. Stalo sa tak za účelom jeho vykradnutia alebo z iných príčin. Zásahy boli identifikované aj v hroboch, kde ostala bohatá výbava. Z toho dôvodu je potrebné rátať aj s inými príčinami pre posteriórne opatrenia. Na základe rozrušenia skeletu ich môžeme rozdeliť na tri oblasti: 1) porušenia lebky, 2) porušenia hrudníka a brušnej dutiny a 3) porušenia končatín, pričom jednotlivé kategórie sa mohli kombinovať na jednom skelete. Narušenie lebky bolo zaznamenané v 118 prípadoch bez rozlišovania príčin, kvôli ktorým sa tak stalo. Pri dospelých iste nie je prekvapujúce, že viac presunov lebiek bolo zaznamenaných u mužov. Súvisí to s tým, že medzi tieto prípady patria aj jedinci, ktorí spáchali trestný čin a ako jeho následok boli popravení. Transformácie kostí hrudníka sa vyskytovali zo všetkých zásahov najčastejšie. Súvisí to pravdepodobne s tým, že v oblasti hrudníka, resp. hlavy sa zvyklo nachádzať najviac cenností (u žien v hornej časti, u mužov v spodnej) a teda by mal byť častejším cieľom vykrádačov hrobov. V hrudníku sa tiež nachádzajú životne dôležité orgány, ktoré mohli byť potenciálnym cieľom zničenia pri ohrození žijúcej komunity. Nie všetky priestorové pohyby rebier, stavcov, či okolitých kostí je však možné pripísať intencionálnemu narušeniu (*Prokeš 2007*, 21).

Zásahy smerujúce do oblasti končatín sa vyskytovali v menšom množstve ako tie smerujúce do oblasti hrudníka. Porušenie dolnej časti trupu a končatín alebo ich odsunutie môže snáď znamenať snahu o znehybnenie (*Hanuliak 2006*, 151). Niektoré prípady absencie končatín by mohli byť spojené s amputáciou. Na zviazanie dolných končatín by mohlo poukazovať ich prekríženie (*Prokeš 2007*, 27).

Treba tiež brať do úvahy, že zmeny, ktoré prebiehali počas trvania Veľkej Moravy neboli ojedinelé a izolované výlučne na toto územie. Prebiehala transformácia z kmeňa na náčelníctvo, v prípade Veľkej Moravy (*Macháček 2009*, 257–261) a v prípade západnej, severnej a zvyšku strednej Európy pokračovala neskôr v stredoveku až na štát. Aj keď časový rámec týchto zmien sa mierne odlišoval, na všetkých sa postupne zjednocuje pohrebný rítus na inhumačný, a tiež sa v období prechodu vo zvýšenej miere vyskytujú atypické hroby (pre územie Anglicka: *Reynolds 2009*; Poľska: pozri viac *Gardeła 2017*). To môže poukazovať na to, že transformácia ktorá prebiehala v spoločnosti, sa odrazila aj v pohrebnom ríte. Kým sa ustálila spoločnosť a jej zvyky, odlišovali sa vo zvýšenej miere aj spôsoby pochovávania.

Anomálne pochovaní jedinci predstavujú kategóriu hrobov, ktorá bude vždy vyvolávať pozornosť a otázky. Reprezentujú atraktívny typ nálezových celkov, pri ktorých je možné aplikovať rôzne, často až extrémne interpretácie. Pozornosť vzbudzujú svojím individualizmom, ktorý je v poslednej dobe čoraz pútavejším a je možné predpokladať, že záujem o tieto nálezy bude len narastať. S novými možnosťami ich analýzy bude možné priniesť pokročilejšie výsledky, ktoré spresnia náš obraz o pochovaných a takisto o celom období.

Obr. 1. Mapa lokalít s atypicky pochovanými jedincami (čísla zodpovedajú číslam uvedeným v tabuľke lokalít). Legenda: ● – pohrebisko; ▲ – sídlisko + osamotený hrob; ○ – pohrebisko/sídlisko; ■ – pohrebisko/osamotený hrob.

Tabela 1. Zoznam lokalít s atypicky pochovanými jedincami. Legenda: A – číslo lokality na mape; B – lokalita; C – poloha; D – okres; E – roky výskumu; F – typ lokality (c – pohrebisko; s – sídlisko; ig – osamotený hrob); G – počet hrobov/objektov; H – poloha na bruchu; I – číslo tabuľky; J – poloha na boku; K – číslo tabuľky; L – poloha na ľavom boku; M – poloha na pravom boku; N – orientácia kostry; O – číslo tabuľky; P – V – Z a priľahlé azimuty; R – S – J, J – S a priľahlé azimuty; S – posteriórne zásahy; T – číslo tabuľky; U – hrob na sídlisku; V – jedinci v sídliskových objektoch; X – datovanie/storočie; Y – literatúra.

Tab. I. Hroby jedincov v polohe na bruchu. 1 – Nitra pod Zoborom, hrob 34 (podľa *Chropovský 1974*); 2 – Malé Kosihy, hrob 215 (podľa *Hanuliak 1986*); 3 – Pobedim, hrob 53 (podľa *Vendtová 1966*); 4 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 301 (podľa *Rajček 1955*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. II. Hroby jedincov v polohe na bruchu a boku. 1 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 322; 2 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 546; 3 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 548 (1–3 podľa *Rajček 1955*); 4 – Bešeňov-Sírdűlő, hrob 15 (podľa *Nevizánsky 1975*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. III. Hroby jedincov v polohe na boku. 1 – Bešeňov, hrob 60 (podľa *Hanuliak 1977*); 2 – Bešeňov, hrob 95 (podľa *Nevizánsky 1978a*); 3 – Cífer-Pác, hrob 8; 4 – Cífer-Pác, hrob 15; 5 – Cífer-Pác, hrob 21; 6 – Cífer-Pác, hrob 26 (3–6 podľa *Zábojník 1976*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. IV. Hroby jedincov v polohe na boku. 1 – Čakajovce, hrob 518 (podľa *Rejholcová 1980*); 2 – Čakajovce, hrob 561; 3 – Čakajovce, hrob 587; 4 – Čakajovce, hrob 672; 5 – Čakajovce, hrob 611 (2–5 podľa *Rejholcová 1981*); 6 – Hurbanovo, hrob 20 (podľa *Rajček 1957*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. V. Hroby jedincov v polohe na boku. 1 – Lefantovce, hrob 10 (podľa *Rejholcová 1989*); 2 – Malé Kosihy, hrob 90 (podľa *Hanuliak 1986*); 3 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 35; 4 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 55; 5 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 90 (3–5 podľa *Chropovský 1968*); 6 – Nitra-Horné Krškany, hrob 85 (podľa *Chropovský 1979*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. VI. Hroby jedincov v polohe na boku. 1 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, hrob 26; 2 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, hrob 39; 3 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, hrob 45; 4 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, hrob 50 (1–4 podľa *Chropovský 1974*); 5 – Pobedim-Na laze, hrob 20; 6 – Pobedim-Na laze, hrob 33 (4, 6 podľa *Vendtová 1966*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. VII. Hroby jedincov v polohe na boku. 1 – Pobedim-Na laze, hrob 108; 2 – Pobedim-Na laze, hrob 112 (1, 2 podľa *Vendtová 1966*); 3 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 75; 4 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 115; 5 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 129; 6 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 154; 7 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 158; 8 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 169; 9 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 261 (3–9 podľa *Rajček 1955*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. VIII. Trnovec nad Váhom. Hroby jedincov v polohe na boku. 1 – hrob 264; 2 – hrob 291; 3 – hrob 340; 4 – hrob 420;

5 – hrob 456; 6 – hrob 503; 7 – hrob 513 (podľa *Rajček 1955*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. IX. Hroby jedincov v sediacej pozícii a hroby s atypickou orientáciou. 1 – Čakajovce, hrob 415 (podľa *Rejholcová 1980*); 2 – Čakajovce, hrob 226 (podľa *Rejholcová 1978b*); 3 – Čakajovce, hrob 788 (podľa *Rejholcová 1983b*); 4 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, hrob 42 (podľa *Chropovský 1974*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. X. Hroby jedincov s atypickou orientáciou a posteriórnymi zásahmi. 1 – Veľký Grob, hrob 87; 2 – Veľký Grob, hrob 101 (1, 2 podľa *Chropovský 1955*); 3 – Bešeňov, hrob 2; 4 – Bešeňov, hrob 6 (3, 4 podľa *Nevizánsky 1975*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. XI. Hroby jedincov s posteriórnymi zásahmi. 1 – Bešeňov, hrob 80 (podľa *Nevizánsky 1978a*); 2 – Čakajovce, hrob 30; 3 – Čakajovce, hrob 53 (2, 3 podľa *Rejholcová 1974*); 4 – Čakajovce, hrob 82 (podľa *Rejholcová 1977*); 5 – Lipová-Ondrochov, hrob 2/57; 6 – Lipová-Ondrochov, hrob 4/57 (5, 6 podľa *Rejholcová 1958*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. XII. Hroby jedincov s posteriórnymi zásahmi. 1 – Lipová-Ondrochov, hrob 30/57 (podľa *Rejholcová 1958*); 2 – Malé Kosihy, hrob 38 (podľa *Hanuliak 1986*); 3 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 1; 4 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 44; 5 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 19; 6 – Nitra-Lupka, hrob 41 (3–6 podľa *Chropovský 1968*); 7 – Nitra-Dolnozoborská cesta, hrob 28 (podľa *Chropovský 1974*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.

Tab. XIII. Hroby jedincov s posteriórnymi zásahmi. 1 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 122; 2 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 255; 3 – Trnovec nad Váhom, hrob 290 (1–3 podľa *Rajček 1955*); 4 –Veľký Grob, hrob 83; 5 – Veľký Grob, hrob 102; 6 – Veľký Grob, hrob 129 (4–6 podľa *Chropovský 1955*). Prekreslila E. Červeňová.