

PHYSICIANS *for* HUMAN RIGHTS

Pere Cuskica br. 24
75000 Tuzla
Bosnia & Hercegovina
tel/fax: 387-75-250-639, tel: 242-936

**Forensic Monitoring Project Report
Kravica, Federation and Tuzla Combined Expert team
November 10, 1997 -November 29, 1997**

Tal Simmons, Ph.D., D-A.B.F.A.
Director, Forensic Monitoring Project
Physicians for Human Rights, Tuzla

Report Date: 25 November 1997

Findings

Summary:

The exhumations at the site known as Kravica (the area of Pobudje) were conducted by the Tuzla Canton Court, Crime Technicians from the Tuzla Police, doctors from the Department of Forensic Medicine at the Tuzla Clinical Center, and representatives of the Bosnian Muslim Federation Commission on Missing Persons from 10-14 November, 17-20 November, and 26-29 November 1997. The exhumations at Kravica in the area of Pobudje, encompassed a roughly triangular area from Nova Kasaba to Konjavic Polje to Lolici. The sites in the Kravica area were of primarily three types: 1) paths and path intersections with single or multiple remains; 2) destroyed and abandoned villages with scattered single or paired remains; and, 3) isolated sites (away from the paths) with many closely associated remains. All remains were surface remains that had been not been buried since the death of the individuals in July 1995. The remains were completely skeletonized. All the remains had suffered damage from taphonomic processes, which included: animal scavenging, vehicular trampling, vehicular dispersal, weathering, gravitational dispersal, human dispersal, and burning.

The bodies recovered in this exhumation are believed to be those of individuals who were killed along the route taken by the column of Muslim men traveling from Srebrenica to Tuzla around 11-13 July 1995 after the fall of Srebrenica.

At the time of this writing, only 18 of the 73 bodies recovered during these exhumations have been examined at autopsy. Sixteen of these individuals were male between the ages of 17 and 50 years (the sex of the two individuals between the ages of 11 and 16 years cannot be determined). The manner of death for all individuals was homicide, and the causes of death were primarily single or multiple gunshot wounds.

Exhumation Participants (with specific functions and/or technical expertise):

Mapping	Dzevad Bektasvic, Crime Technician
Photography	Anton Cota, Crime Technician
Video	Sejo Alic, Crime Technician
Forensic Medicine	Dr. Rifat Kesetovic, Tuzla Clinical Center Dr. Vedo, Tuzla Clinical Center
Legalities/Clothing Description	Judge Halilcovic, Tuzla Canton Court
Location of Remains	Amor Masovic, President of the Muslim Federation Commission on Missing Persons Murat Hurtic, Tuzla Canton Representative, Muslim Federation Commission on Missing Persons
Forensic Technical Advisors	Dr. Tal Simmons, Dierector, Forensic Monitoring Project, Physicians for Human Rights Dr. Page Hudson, Forensic Monitoring Project, Physicians for Human Rights Dr. Richard Harrington, Forensic Monitoring Project, Physicians for Human Rights

Site Description Overview:

The exhumations at Kravica in the area of Pobudje, encompassed a roughly triangular area from Nova Kasaba to Konjavic Polje to Lolic (Figure 1). The specific site names, referring to abandoned villages and the paths connecting them, where a total number of 73 bodies were exhumed are: Bacici (3 bodies), Burnice (5 bodies), Islamovici (1 body), Jelah (12 bodies), Krke (4 bodies), Rahunici (26 bodies), Suljici (7 bodies), Svilile (9 bodies), and Vrtace (6 bodies).

The Kravica (Pobudje) area is mountainous and heavily forested with dense undergrowth, comprised largely of thorny bushes. Numerous small streams, and some intermittent streams, are located within this area. Several small villages, now largely destroyed, dot the hillsides and are connected by unpaved roads. The sites in the Kravica area were of primarily three types: 1) paths and path intersections with single or multiple remains; 2) destroyed and abandoned villages with scattered single or paired remains; and, 3) isolated sites (away from the paths) with many closely associated remains.

All remains, without exception, were completely skeletonized. All remains were surface remains that had not been deliberately buried, and in most cases the primary portion of the remains was in the original location the individual fell when he was killed in 1995. Numerous bodies were recovered in the roads themselves; these were highly fragmented and widely dispersed due to the repeated passage of numerous vehicles over the bodies since July 1995. Although some clothing was associated with most of

the remains, in many cases the clothing had deteriorated to mere shreds and was difficult to recognize as a specific item. In contrast, shoes and belts were usually well preserved. Personal effects were occasionally present; these included still legible Polaroid photographs, spoons, ammunition, coffee pots, rings, keys, etc. Several document folders were found, but very few documents contained inserts, and fewer of these were legible.

Bodies recovered from Type 1 sites were located along the sides of roads, in the roads, and in the dense brush above and below the roads. Bodies in these sites that were located along the sides of the roads were often partially buried in soil and leaf fall as well as being covered by new growth of grass. These bodies were generally articulated or mostly articulated, although in most cases taphonomic agents had been active. Animal scavengers had gnawed some of the long bones and carried them some distance from the primary remains. The recovery of skulls proved problematic at these sites, as most of the remains were located near a steep incline and the skulls of many of the bodies had rolled some distance from the primary remains. In other instances, it seemed clear that individuals passing through the area had picked up skulls, moved them, and placed them in different locations (e.g. up-slope of the primary remains, on fence posts, in trees, etc.).

The location and recovery of remains found within the roads was extremely difficult, especially so in cases where paths intersected. Here the remains of multiple individuals (up to 9) occupied the same general area, commingling was apparent, and clothing scarce.

Bodies recovered from Type 2 sites were located near, but not within, abandoned and destroyed buildings (mostly houses, in one instance a mosque). These remains were of single individuals, or at most 2-3 individuals, and were articulated or partially articulated. The remains were usually covered by grass and thorny bushes. Animal scavenging was responsible for some movement of skeletal elements, but the remains were not widely dispersed.

Bodies recovered from Type 3 sites were distinct from the other two types of sites both because of their isolation and the numbers of individuals found within them. Only two type 3 sites were exhumed at Kravica, and both of these contained 9 individuals. One site was at Rahunici, below the mosque and above the village area. This site appears to be an execution site (see Summary of Autopsy Findings). The other site was located at the peak of a mountain ridge (labeled 484 m on the map; Figure 1), northwest of the village of Jelah. This site appears to represent a group of individuals across the age spectrum (from approximately 11 to >40 years of age), who had been eating a meal when they were ambushed (see Summary of Autopsy Findings).

History Relating to the Mass Grave:

Around 11 July 1995, when Srebrenica fell to the Serbs, thousands of Muslim men left the city in a column heading for Tuzla in Muslim controlled Bosnia. They passed through the area of Pobudje, South of Kravica, soon thereafter heading roughly West-Northwest towards Nova Kasaba. The bodies recovered in this exhumation are believed to be those of individuals who were killed along this route under various circumstances (see Site Description Overview and Summary of Autopsy Findings).

Exhumation Process and Condition of Remains:

Location of Remains:

At Kravica, bodies were located in three ways: first by traveling along the roads and paths in the course of reaching a location known to contain remains, second by scouting for remains and clothing, and third by witness recollection. In the first situation, the team would be traveling to a location known to contain remains and note additional remains either in the road, in intersections, or by the sides of the roads (Type 1 sites). In several instances, numerous vehicles passed over these remains in the process of reaching the known location. The remains located in this manner were recovered later, but had suffered additional damage and dispersal from the convoy of vehicles. In the second situation, Mr. Amor Masovic and Mr. Murat Hurtic scouted ahead of the exhumation Expert Team (Police Crime Technicians from the Tuzla Police and members of the Forensic Medicine Department at the Tuzla Clinical Center). Mr. Masovic and Mr. Hurtic primarily kept to the roads and paths, scouting by vehicle and on foot, but occasionally traveled through stream beds and along ridge lines (Type 1 sites). In the third situation, Mr. Masovic and Mr. Hurtic brought witnesses to the site who led the team to specific sites. In several instances the witness could be heard telling Mr. Masovic that a certain individual had been killed on a particular spot. The remains were often dispersed around this locale. Most of the Type 2 sites and both of the Type 3 sites were located in this manner.

Recovery of Remains:

Once a site was located, a Crime Technician (Anton Cota) would photograph the general area. A relatively continuous videotape was filmed (by Crime Technician Sejo Alic) of the entire processing of the scene, and all important actions were documented in this manner. Crime technicians staked out a perimeter which contained the greatest concentration of skeletal remains and clothing. The location of the remains were mapped (by Crime Technician Dzevad Bektasvic).

The location of all items was marked with pin flags and photographed and the entire area was cleared of leaves, grass, thorny bushes, occasionally snow, etc. Trowels were used to excavate (scrape) the ground surface where remains were only partially visible. The process of excavation was particularly important when remains were located within the roads and had been compressed into the gravel and mud road surface by the passage of innumerable vehicles since 1995.

When the site was believed to contain the remains of multiple individuals, individual skeletal elements were re-associated into complete bodies, taking into consideration the topography of the area, the estimated biological age of each element as well as any associated clothing. Individual photographs of each case-numbered element/clothing item (or group of items) were taken with a meter scale included in the frame. Dzevad Bektasvic and Judge Halilcovic also recorded in writing the clothing associated with each set of remains.

Once this process was completed, the remains were collected in large garbage bags labeled with the individual case number. A final sweep and search of the area was conducted by the team to determine that all remains had been located before moving to a new locale.

Condition of Remains:

All remains were completely skeletonized. The remains had all suffered damage from taphonomic processes, which included: animal scavenging (gnawing, dispersal, etc.), vehicular trampling, vehicular dispersal, weathering, gravitational dispersal, human dispersal (individuals moving parts of remains, and placing, for example, a skull on a fence post, in a tree, or up-slope), and burning. In the

latter instances, it is unclear whether the remains were burned still fleshed, shortly after death (perimortem) from having fallen into an already burning cooking fire (Jelah 3-10, for example) or had been set afire during the postmortem interval (when partially decomposed/skeletonized) by other individuals in an attempt to either destroy the "evidence" or simply as a means of disposing of a decomposing corpse.

There was significant commingling at all sites containing more than one individual; in all circumstances, the commingling was identified and the remains successfully separated into discrete individuals in the field. Partial remains were occasionally recovered, as taphonomic processes and weather conditions (snow and leaf cover) had rendered the rest of the skeletal elements impossible to locate despite significant efforts.

Clothing was frequently, but not always associated with the remains. While footwear and belts remained relatively well-preserved, most other clothing was badly deteriorated by weather and plant growth through it. Personal effects were infrequently present, but included eating utensils, food tins, ammunition, photographs, plastic document folders, pens, razors, razor blades, fragments of mirrors, and a shaving brush. Only one legible (individual's name and "Srebrenica") personal identity document was recovered (from the ridge-top site at Jelah).

Summary of Autopsy Findings:

The following is a list of the number of bodies recovered by date and site within the Pobudje, Kravica area:

Date	Site	Number of Remains
10.11	Vrtace	6
11.11	Burnice	2
	Suljici	1
12.11	Suljici	3
13.11	Rahunici	9
14.11	Rahunici	9
17.11	Krke	3
	Rahunici	2
18.11	Bacici	3
	Svilile	4
19.11	Jelah	10
20.11	Jelah	2
	Svilile	2
26.11	Suljici	3
27.11	Islamovici	1
	Burnice	3
28.11	Rahunici	5
29.11	Svilile	3
	Rahunici	1
	Krke	1

TOTAL

73

Of the remains of the 73 individuals recovered at Kravica during these exhumations, a relatively small number have been examined at autopsy at the date of this report. On 15-16 November 1997, Tal Simmons examined the remains of nine individuals (Rah 1-9) from the site of Rahunici. On 21-22 November 1997, Dr. Tal Simmons (PHR), Dr. Rick Harrington (PHR), and Dr. Page Hudson (PHR) examined the remains of nine individuals (Jel 2-10) from the site of Jelah.

Jelah 2-10:

The site of Jelah was located at the highest part (far most western edge) of a mountain ridge (labeled 484 m on the map; Figure 1), northwest of the village of Jelah. This site held the remains of a group of individuals across the age spectrum (from approximately 11 to >40 years of age), possibly an extended family group, who had been eating a meal when they were ambushed. The remains were located around a fire circle and items associated with a meal such as a coffee pot, utensils (a spoon found in close approximation to the hand of Jel-4), opened and un-opened food tins (sardines, etc.) were scattered amongst the bodies.

A rough sketch of the site noting the relative positions of the bodies is provided in Figure 2. The degree of dispersal of the remains varied from individual to individual, with Jel-4, Jel-7, Jel-6, and Jel-8 retaining the highest degree of articulation, and Jel-2, Jel-9 and Jel-10 the least.

Jel-2, a male aged 23-33 years, was located in the northeast corner of the site, at some distance from the other individuals. The pattern of injuries associated with Jel-2 differ significantly from those found in Jel 3-10. While all other individuals only showed evidence of either gunshot, projectile or blunt force injuries, Jel-2 exhibited three separate blunt force injuries to the back of the skull (both parietals and the occipital) and one sharp force trauma injury to the right parietal in addition to an anterior-posterior gunshot wound to the axillary border of the left scapula. An additional clue to the fate of this individual is that, while no clothing was found directly associated with the remains, several items of traditional women's clothing were found close to his body. It is thus possible that this individual was disguised as a woman. Both the location of this individual and the pattern of his injuries are consistent with that of a sentry guarding the only accessible approach to the site where the others were located. It is probable that this individual was the first to be shot and his attire may have caused him to be singled out by his killers for especially harsh treatment at close contact.

The age, sex, stature, peri-mortem injuries, cause of death and manner of death (as determined by PHR anthropologists and pathologists) for each of the nine individuals is provided in Table 1. In summary, gunshot or projectile injuries either directly caused or contributed to the deaths of eight individuals at this site; the cause of death for Jel-4 was blunt force trauma to the head and for Jel-8 it is unknown.

Rahunici 1-9:

The remains Rah 1-9 were located above (South of) the village of Rahunici and below (North of) the mosque in an isolated, small clearing with an intermittent stream running through one end of the site. This appearance of the site differed significantly from those of other sites in the Pobudje area in that there were a relatively large number (9) of closely associated remains and that the remains were found in a line with the bodies in approximately the same positions. The appearance of the Rahunici site, confirmed by the results of the autopsies, is consistent with an execution site.

A rough field sketch of the site and the remains is depicted in Figure 3. Bodies Rah-7 and Rah-8

were largely submerged in the mud, and Rah-9 was located, partially submerged, within the intermittent stream, which was flowing at the time of the exhumation. Please note in Figure 2 that, as discovered during the autopsies, commingling of Rah-1 and Rah-2 had inadvertently occurred in the field; the cranium, mandible, cervical vertebrae, innominates, femora, patellae, tibiae, fibulae, tarsals, metatarsals, and pedal phalanges labeled Rah-1 in the field, actually articulate with the upper body skeleton of Rah-2, and those same elements labeled Rah-2 in the field actually articulate with the upper body of Rah-1. The size differential between these two individuals was more clearly detected in the morgue than had been possible in the field conditions.

The age, sex, stature, peri-mortem injuries, cause of death and manner of death (as determined by PHR anthropologists and pathologists) for each of the nine individuals is provided in Table 2. The findings are consistent with these individuals being lined up and shot, probably beginning with Rah-1 and ending with Rah-9. The cause of death for the first three individuals is recorded as "gunshot wound to the head," while for the next six individuals it is recorded as "multiple gunshot wounds." The first four individuals were shot in the head, as were individuals Rah-7 and Rah-8. The first three individuals were shot twice each, while the next six individuals were shot multiple times, with the result of a minimum of three to a maximum of seven separate wounds. This pattern is consistent with an execution which began in an "orderly fashion," but which, as the other prisoners became aware of what was happening to the first few men and panicked, the executioner(s) began to fire at random into those remaining.

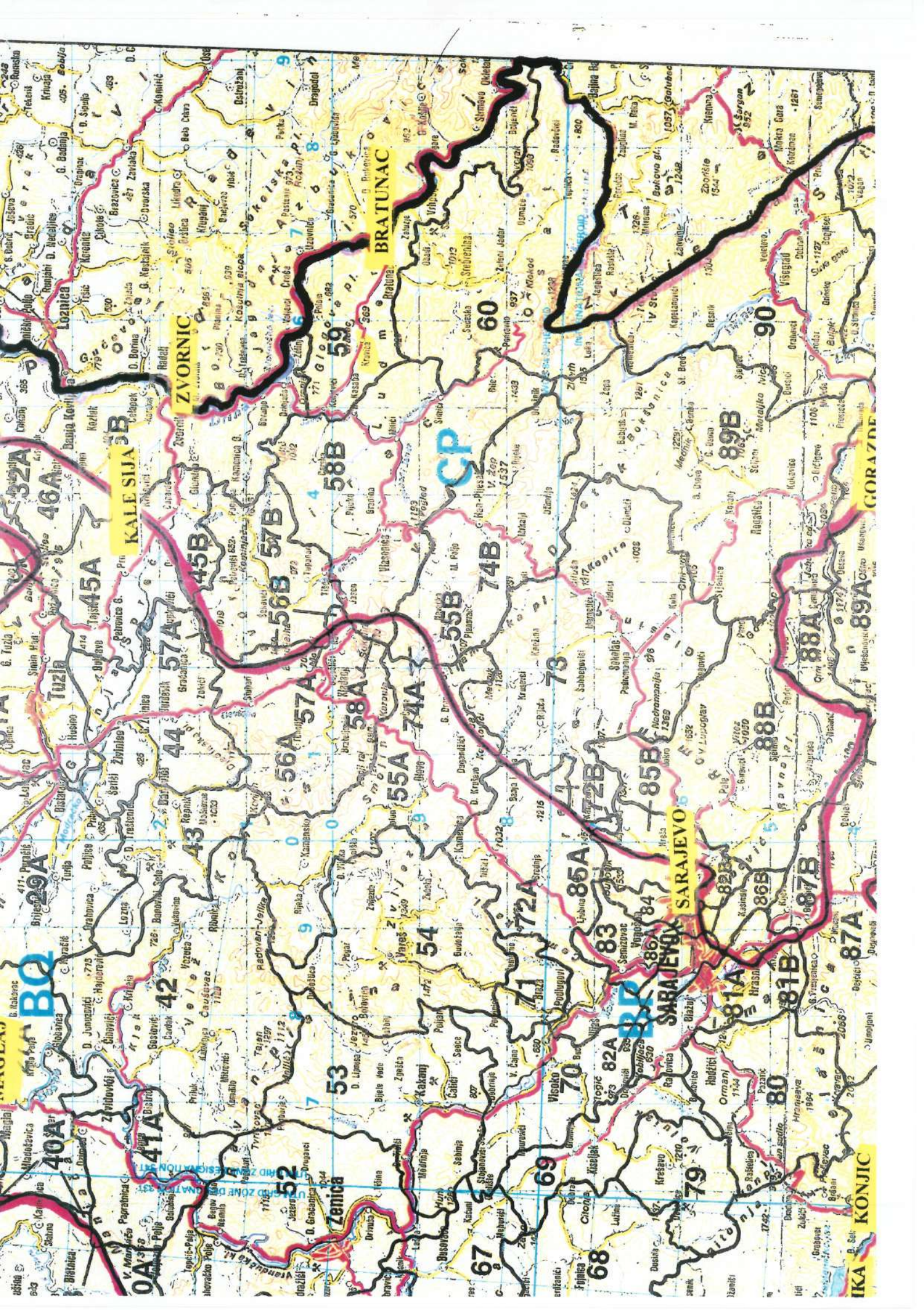
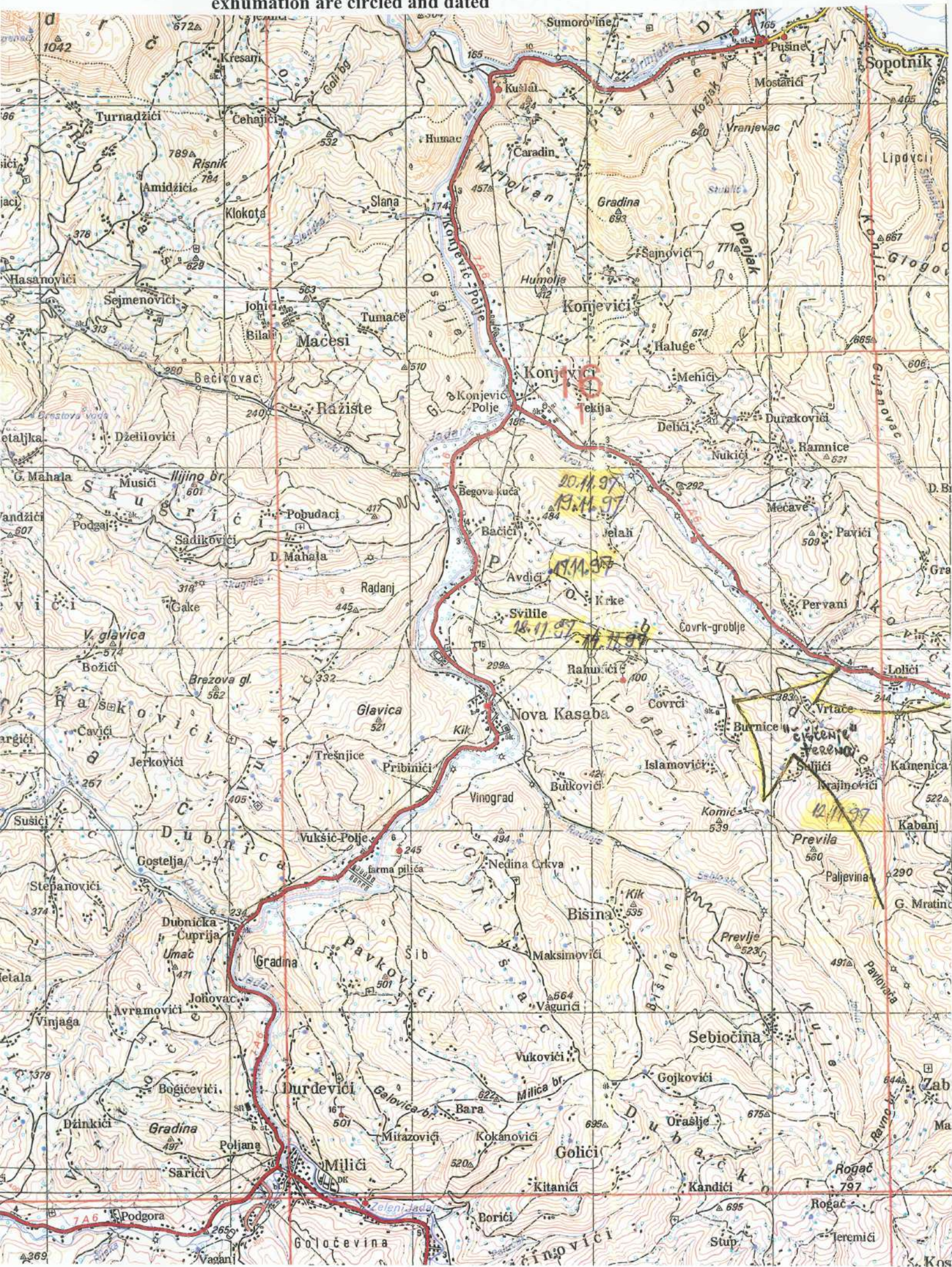


Figure 1. Topographic Map of the "Kravica" Exhumations in Pobudje Area, 10-14 November, 17-20 November, and 26-29 November 1997. Areas covered by the exhumation are circled and dated



Schematic Diagram of the Distribution of the bodies Jel-2 through Jel-10 at the Jelah Ridgetop Site.

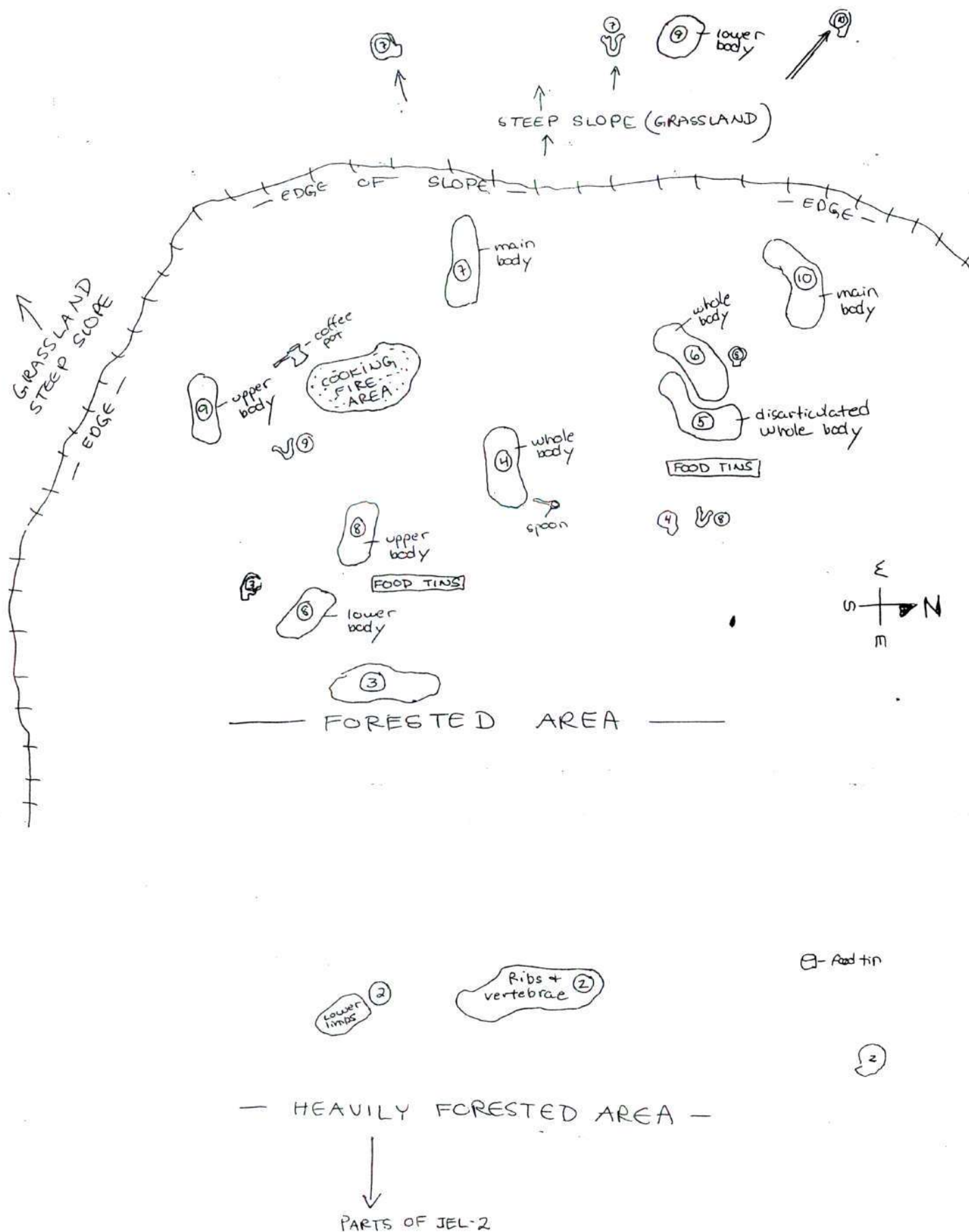


Figure 3. Field sketch of the Distribution of the bodies Rah-1 through Rah-9 at the Rahunici Execution Site.

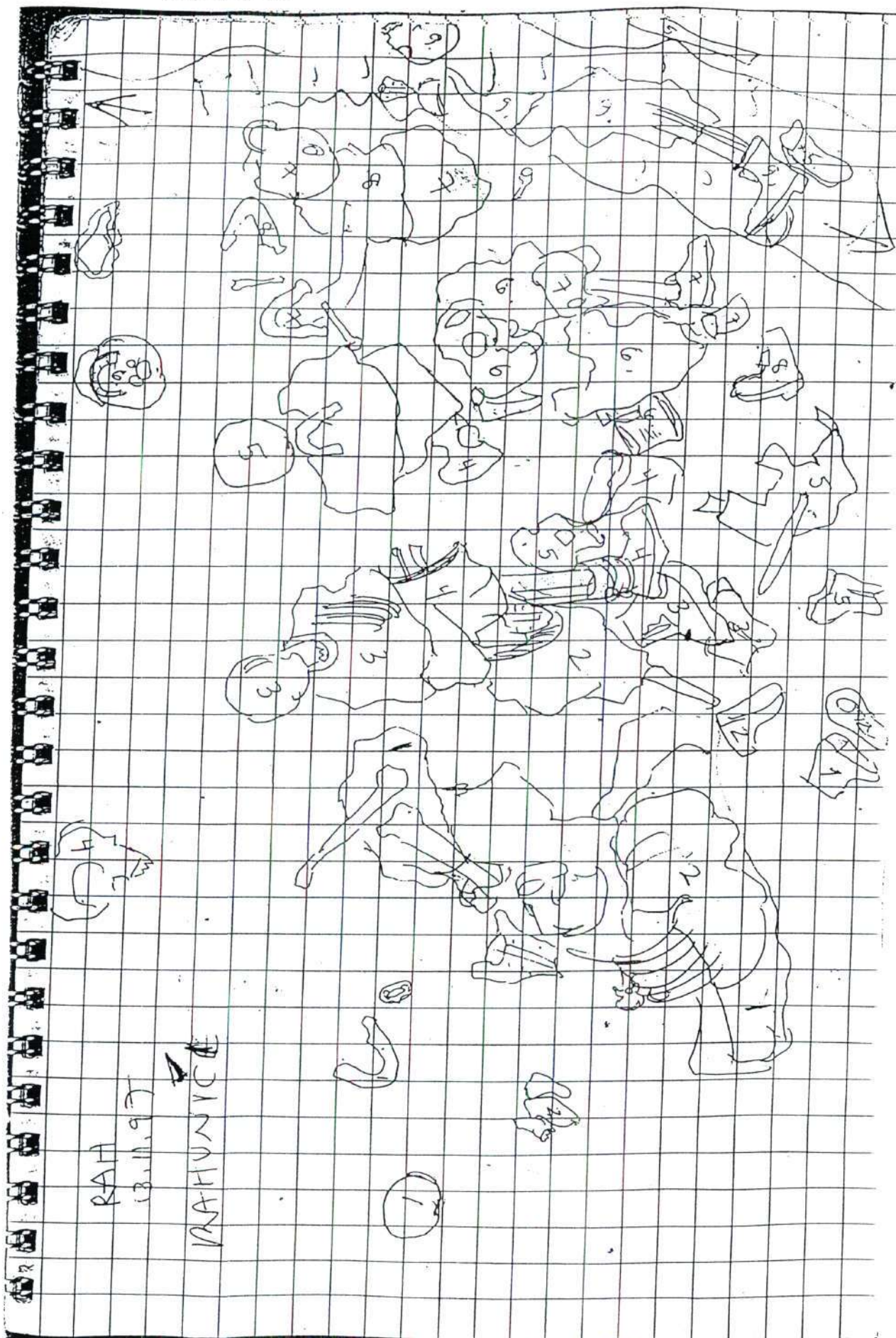


Table 1. Age, Sex, Stature, Peri-mortem Injuries, Cause of Death and Manner of Death for Individuals Exhumed on 19 November 1997 from the Jelah area, Pobudje, "Kravica"

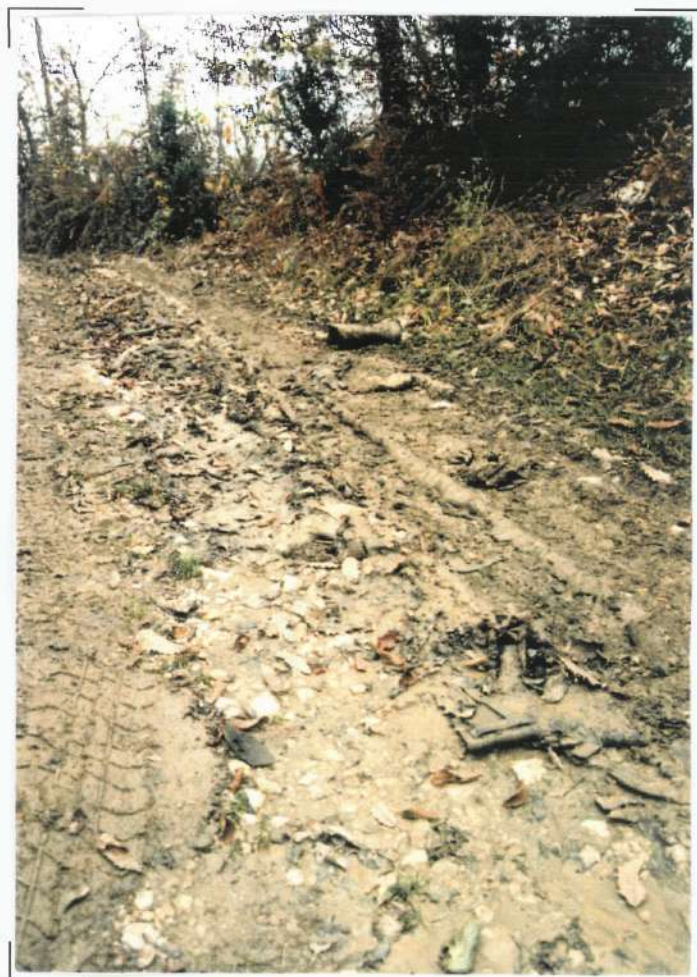
Individual	Age (years)	Sex	Stature (cm.)	Peri-mortem Injuries	Cause of Death	Manner of Death
Jel-2	23-33	M	177.25-183.75	Sharp force trauma to the right parietal Blunt force trauma to the posterior cranium (x3) Anterior-posterior gunshot wound to the left scapula	Gunshot wound to the chest with blunt force trauma to the head	Homicide
Jel-3	20-25	M	178-184	Gunshot wound to the left scapula Gunshot wound to the left humerus Gunshot wound to the right ribs Gunshot wound to the left ilium	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Jel-4	13-16	Undetermined	Undetermined	Blunt force trauma to the lower face	Blunt force trauma to the cranium	Homicide
Jel-5	35-45	M	169.75-175.75	Gunshot wound through the left and right ilia Gunshot wound to the left ribs	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Jel-6	40-50	M	170-176	Gunshot wound to the cranium (right frontal bone) Gunshot wound to the left scapula	Gunshot wound to the cranium	Homicide
Jel-7	11-14	Undetermined	Undetermined	Projectile fragment wound to the right scapula Projectile fragment wound to the left ribs	Projectile wounds to the chest	Homicide
Jel-8	25-35	M	170-176	Gunshot wound to the right hand	Unknown	Homicide
Jel-9	35-55	M	170-177	Gunshot wound to the left scapula	Gunshot wound to the chest	Homicide
Jel-10	28-42	M	177-183	Two gunshot wounds to the right scapula	Gunshot wounds to the chest	Homicide

Table 2. Age, Sex, Stature, Peri-mortem Injuries, Cause of Death and Manner of Death for Individuals Exhumed on 13 November 1997 from the Rahunici area, Pobudje, "Kravica"

Individual	Age (years)	Sex	Stature (cm.)	Peri-mortem Injuries	Cause of Death	Manner of Death
Rah-1	17-21	M	175-181	Blunt force trauma to the right scapula Gunshot wound to the cranium Gunshot wound to the left radius and ulna	Gunshot wound to the cranium	Homicide
Rah-2	24-30	M	185-191	Gunshot wound to the cranium Gunshot wound to the right radius	Gunshot wound to the cranium	Homicide
Rah-3	17-21	M	172-178	Two gunshot wounds to the cranium	Gunshot wounds to the cranium	Homicide
Rah-4	17-21	M	174.25-181.25	Gunshot wound to the mandible and basi-cranium Gunshot wound to the right ribs Gunshot wound to two thoracic vertebrae Gunshot wound to a lumbar vertebra Gunshot wound to the right femur	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Rah-5	30-40	M	173-179	Two gunshot wounds to the left ilium Gunshot wound to the right femur Gunshot wound to the right ribs Gunshot wound to the thoracic vertebrae	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Rah-6	35-50	M	179-185	Gunshot wound to the left mandible Gunshot wound to the left ribs Gunshot wound to the right ribs Gunshot wound to the thoracic vertebrae Gunshot wound to the left scapula	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Rah-7	20-28	M	171.8-177.8	Gunshot wound to the cranium Gunshot wound to the thoracic vertebrae Gunshot wound to the right ribs Gunshot wound to the right clavicle and scapula Gunshot wound to the right femur Gunshot wound to the left humerus	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Rah-8	17-23	M	166.25-172.75	Two gunshot wounds to the cranium Gunshot wound to the left scapula Gunshot wound to the left humerus Gunshot wound to the left hand Gunshot wound to the thoracic vertebrae Gunshot wound to the left femur	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide
Rah-9	25-40	M	169-175	Gunshot wound to the left scapula and humerus Gunshot wound to the right humerus Gunshot wound to the right ulna	Multiple gunshot wounds	Homicide



Intersection site near Rahunici (Type 1 site).
Kravica
Nov. 1997



2

Type 1 site near village Rahunici. Clothing and skeletal elements visible within tire tracks on road.

**Kravica
Nov. 1997**



**Expert team workers clearing brush from a Type 1 site.
Kravica
Nov. 1997**



**Overview of Rahunici site (Type 3), containing RAH-1 through
RAH-9 execution victims.**

**Kravica
Nov. 1997**



**Dzevad Bektasevic and Rifat Kesetovic re-articulating and labeling
remains at Rahunici site.**

Kravica
Nov. 1997

5



Dzevad Bektasevic labeling individual skeletal elements at Rahunici site.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



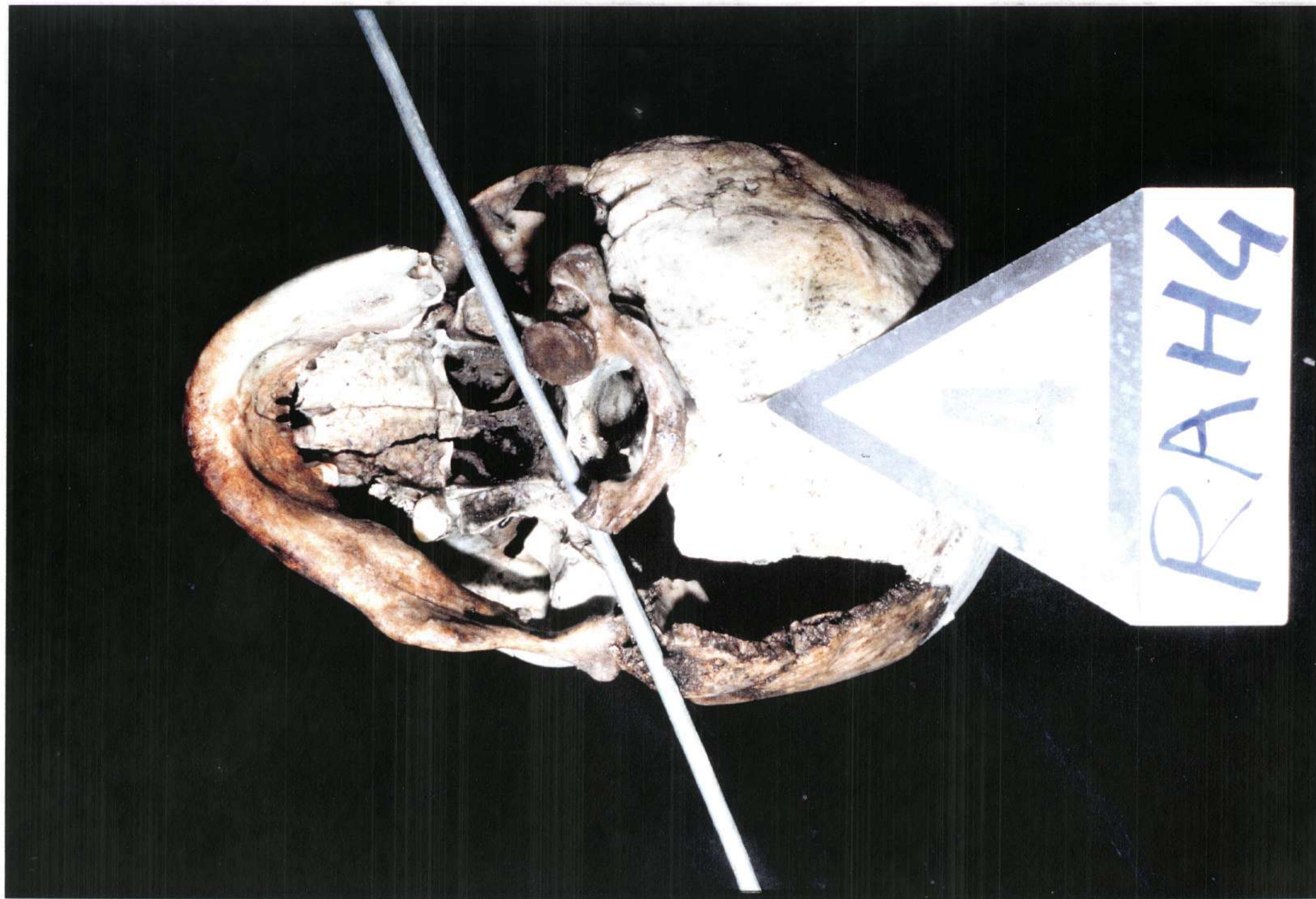
Rahunici site showing position of bodies and commingling of RAH 3-5.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Footwear of RAH-1-9 execution victims.
Kravica
Nov. 1997



RAH-4 showing angle of bullet entry.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



RAH-4 showing path of bullet. Note absence of right atlas (C 1).
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Remains of VRT-5 at a Type 2 site near the village.
Kravica
Nov. 1997



**Remains in the area of Vrtace covered with brush along
the slope.
Kravica
Nov. 1997**

1/2



Remains of VRT-1, VRT-2, VRT-3, VRT-4 after clearing of brush.

Kravica

Nov. 1997

110



Remains of VRT-1.
Kravica
Nov. 1997



Remains of VRT-1 covered with brush at time of location.
Kravica
Nov. 1997



16
Members of the Expert Team mark and photograph VRT-5.
Kravica
Nov. 1997
16



17 The Jeloh site maked with pin-flage.
Kravica
Nov. 1997

18



Type 3 site at Jelah. Foreground knee joint and right midground mandible covered in snow and fallen leaves.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Two skulls of JEL-5 and JEL-6 at the Jelah site upon discovery.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Jelah site. Skull of JEL-4 (13-16 years of age) and the remains of JEL-5 after site clearing.

Kravica, Nov. 1997

08



**Dr. Simmons re-articulating mandible and cranium
from different areas of Jeloh site.**

Kravica
Nov. 1997



Picking up the remains from the Jelah site.

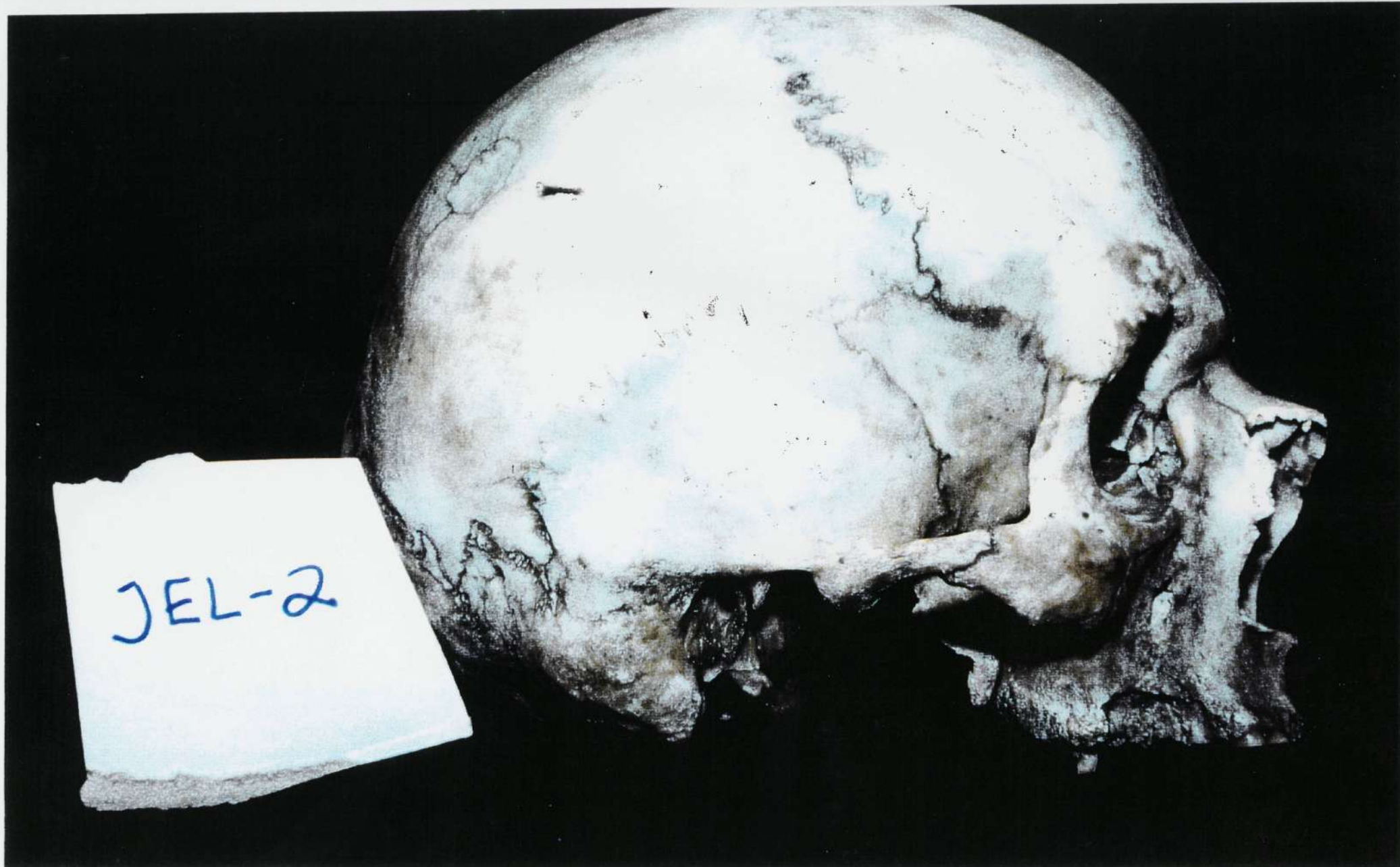
Kravica

Nov. 1997



JEL-2

Posterior view of JEL-2 cranium showing 4 distinct blunt force trauma injuries.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Cranium of JEL-2 showing blunt force and sharp force trauma to the Right
Parietal.
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Left scapula of JEL-2 showing Anterior-Posterior gunshot in axillary border.
Kravica, Nov. 1997

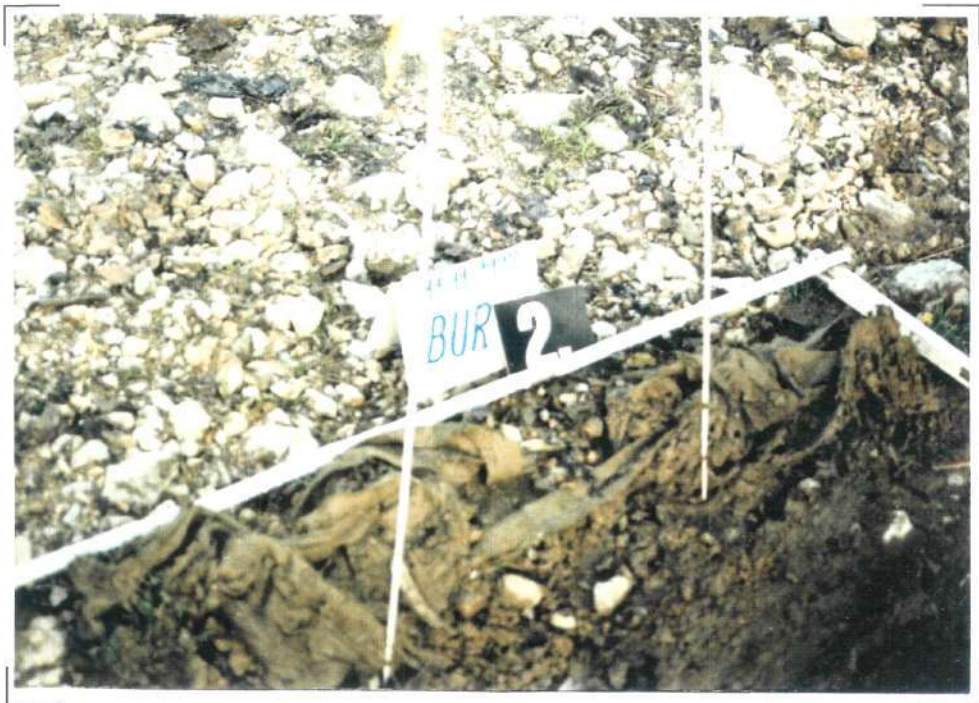


Gunshot injuries (Right to Left) of JEL-5 ilia
Kravica, Nov. 1997



Gunshot injury to ribs of JEL-5
Kravica, Nov. 1997

78



Remains of body BUR-2 within the road surface.

Kravica

Nov. 1997



Re-association of remains. Left-right: Dzevad Bektasevic, Vedo Tuco,
Elvira Tahirovic and Tal Simmons.

Kravica
Nov. 1997