

STORY OF THE VILLA ESTATE: ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND PALEORADIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF CSUCSHEGY- HARSANYLEJTO (3RD-4TH C. CE) FROM PANNONIA

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Background: Aquincum as the capital of Pannonia Inferior was once part of the Roman Empire. The human population here was a mixture of romanized autochthon tribes and immigrants from across the Empire. Besides the civic and military towns, multiple villa estates were discovered by archaeologists in this area. One example for the latter is Csucshegy-Harsanylejtó (3rd–4th centuries CE) where a grave group of 13 individuals were found directly next to the villa building, and another group of 16 burials were excavated ca. 200–300 meters away from remains of the building.

Objective: Our goal was to reveal the life histories and reconstruct lifestyle of the individuals.

Materials and methods: Age estimation and sex determination were carried out by internationally accepted methodologies from macromorphological approach. In order to facilitate the proper diagnosis of the macroscopically observed pathologies (which data were collected based on individual and element count approach) and to reveal hidden alterations, the skeletal material underwent radiological investigation as well.

Results: The grave groups show a distinct demographic picture since the individuals found around the building are mainly subadults. Despite the small number of individuals, many interesting pathological cases (e.g. artificial cranial modification, stress markers, traumatic alterations, possible metabolic disorder, or signs of infections) were found during the palaeopathological analysis indicating life histories marked by stress exposure, as well as environmental and health-related challenges.

Keywords: Aquincum; Villa estate; Anthropology; Paleopathology; Paleoradiology.

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