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Rezumat

În anul 2016 a fost susţinută a treia campanie de cercetare în necropolele de la Jucu, în legătură cu proiectul "Jucu – cercetări arheologice şi bioarheologice", colaborare între IAIA Cluj şi Transylvania Bioarchaeology (planificat pentru perioada 2014 – 2019). Pe această calea a fost reluată investigarea arheologică sistematică a celor două cimitire medievale timpurii de la Jucu de Sus–Râtul boilor (parcul industrial Tetarom III), situate pe locul unei foste construcţii romane. Cel mai vechi este de incineraţie, cu depunerea resturilor funerare în urne, iar comparaţia cu aşezarea contemporană (identificată în apropiere şi deja cercetată în mare măsură) permite datarea sa în sec. VIII (mai probabil a doua sa jumătate) şi în prima jumătate a sec. IX. A fost suprapus şi în mare parte distrus (este posibil să fi existat şi morminte de înhumaţie contemporane celor de incineraţie) de o întinsă necropolă creştină din secolele XI–XII. În legătură cu aceasta, în sezonul 2016 au fost identificate şi cercetate alte şapte morminte de înhumaţie, ca de obicei orientate vest (capul) – est. Inventarul complexelor funerare este foarte sărac, doar în mormântul 27 au fost găsite două inele de buclă cu capătul în formă de "S", din bronz sau argint de slabă calitate. Pentru prima data poate fi ilustrată depunerea craniului de cal în legătură cu unul dintre mormintele din sec. XI–XII (groapa 191). A fost identificat un singur mormânt de incineraţie, cu urna în bună parte distrusă (mormântul 22). Aproape sigur, multe dintre mormintele necropolei de incineraţie au fost distruse de înmormântările ulterioare, aşa cum dovedeşte apariţia izolată a fragmentelor ceramice din urne ori a oaselor calcinate. Rămân sub semnul întrebării explicaţiile în legătură cu gropile identificate şi în această campanie, fiind de datat, cel mai probabil, în epoca romană.

Raport

Project Background

The site of Jucu de Sus is located 21 km north east of Cluj-Napoca and is situated on the floodplain, 500m north west of the Someşul Mic River. The site was identified and partially excavated in 2007 prior to the construction of the Nokia industrial park (the site is now occupied by a solar farm). Was first identified and partially excavated in 2007 prior to the construction of an industrial park (Tetarom III) with a roman period villa rustica, two separate early medieval settlements (dating to the 8th – the first half of the 9th and 11th – 12th centuries), and their corresponding cemeteries which were located in and around the abandoned Roman building (note 47). A preliminary analysis has already been undertaken on the inhumation burials, which identified individuals belonging to all age groups from infant to mature adult, and both males and females. A number of pathological conditions were also identified, including dental disease, degenerative joint disease, metabolic disease, infectious disease and trauma (note 48).

The 2014-15 seasons of excavation recovered the remains of nineteen inhumed individuals and one

cremation (note 49). The skeletal analysis of these was undertaken during the 2014 and 2015 seasons. The re-analysis of the remains from the 2007 excavation was also started during the 2014-2015 seasons and continued this year, alongside the analysis of the individuals excavated during the current season.

The Site

The aims of the 2016 season were to excavate the strip to the north of the 2015 trench in order to locate the southern side of the 2007 trench and allow the two excavation areas to be tied in to each other; and to relocate the burial partially exposed in the western section of square A0 during the 2014 and 2015 seasons and fully excavate it. With this in mind, the 2016 trench encompassed the 5m grid squares to the north of the 2015 excavation area and the one to the west of square A0. The 5m grid squares to the west of A-1 and to the south of the 2015 trench were also stripped of turf but no further excavation occurred in these areas. In contrast to the start of the 2015 season, on arriving at site, the limits of excavation of the previous trench were clearly visible and these were used to mark out the limits of the new excavation areas. During the course of excavation, the western section of the 2015 trench was re-excavated and found to be slightly off alignment with the 2016 trench. However, this misalignment was only very minor and the 2015 trench edge was recorded on the site plans to allow for realignment with the 2016 trench in final recording.

By the end of the 2016 excavation season, the two grid squares, plus a 2m by 2m extension to the east to allow for the excavation of a grave that extended under the trench edge, to the north of the 2015 trench had been completely excavated. Some features within squares Z1 and Z2 were also excavated but full excavation of the squares was not completed. The backfill in a small area of the north-west corner of square A0 was also removed to allow for excavation of the burial identified but not investigated in 2014 and 2015 (the two possible grave cuts adjacent to this burial that had been tentatively identified in 2014 and 2015 were found on re-excavation, not to be real features).

The bench-mark that had been established in 2014 and was located to the south of the 2015 excavation area could, unfortunately, not be re-located at the start of the 2016 season, as it appeared that the area had been disturbed by heavy machinery. Therefore a new temporary bench mark was established on the north-east corner of the large storage building to the south of the excavation area. This was given an arbitrary height of 285m above sea-level, pending the establishment of the actual height with GPS. However, by the end of the season, the GPS equipment had still not become available and the project is still waiting for this information to be supplied by the Romanian contingent. Therefore, no heights above sea-level will be given for features in this report.

Site Narrative

The whole area of the excavation was covered in a thin and sparse turf of no more than 2cm. This covered a thin (8-10cm), dark brownish grey topsoil (168). Under the topsoil was a dark brownish grey, sandy silt layer (172), with moderate inclusions of moderately sorted gravel, sandstone and tile fragments, and with finds of pottery, animal bone, brick/tile and metal. This layer was identified in 2014 as a Roman occupation layer associated with the villa rustica. All of the excavated features cut through this layer, which was approximately 20cm thick. It was very difficult to see cut-features in this material, with the appearance of human bone sometimes being the first indication that there was a feature present, with the result that all the features were horizontally truncated to some degree in the course of excavation. This layer overlay a mid brownish grey sandy silt, completely devoid of archaeological material that probably represents an alluvial layer over the natural, which was composed of loose sand, gravel and pebbles.

Thirteen cut features were excavated during this season, comprising seven single inhumation graves, a cremation burial, one post-hole, three pits and the 2007 excavation trench. Context numbers were also assigned to a small area with uncertain limits that contained a concentration of cremated bone and unburnt animal bone. These features are described below:

Inhumation Graves

Grave 21 (in the east of square B2/west of square C2). The grave cut [169] was a sub-rectangular feature, with rounded corners, vertical east, north and south sides and a moderately sloping west side and a flat base. It was orientated southwest-northeast, with a length of 1.82 m, a width of 0.70m and a surviving

depth of 0.21 m. The grave fill (170) was a dark brownish grey sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles, angular sandstone fragments and flecks of tile and finds of pottery, animal bone and brick/tile. The adult skeleton (SK171) was orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and was supine and extended, with the arms straight. There were animal burrows underneath the right arm and left leg, which may have accounted for the loss of the right hand and most of the feet.

Grave 23 (in the east of square Z1/west of square A1). The grave cut [188] was a sub-rectangular feature, with sub-rounded corners, near vertical to steeply sloping sides and an irregular base that sloped to the centre. It was orientated west-east and was approximately 2.00 m in length, 0.70 m in width and 0.25 m in depth (the east end of the grave had been severely horizontally truncated in the course of the 2015 excavation). There was an animal burrow at the base of the western end. The grave fill (189) was a dark greyish brown sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles, sandstone fragments and tile and finds of pottery, animal bone and brick/tile. The adult skeleton (SK190) was relatively poorly preserved, with disintegration of the spine, ribs and ends of the long bones. The left hand was also missing. They were orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and were supine and extended with arms straight.

Grave 24 (in the north west of square A2). The grave cut [193] was a sub-rectangular feature, with rounded corners, vertical sides, and a flat base that sloped up to the east. It was orientated west-east and was 1.90m in length, 0.50m in width (although it had been slightly truncated on the north side by [173]) and approximately 0.32m in depth. The grave fill (194) was a dark brownish grey sandy silt with inclusions of sandstone fragments and tile and finds of pottery, animal bone and brick/tile. The adult skeleton (SK195) was orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and was supine and extended with arms straight. The majority of the ribs and the left hand were missing and an animal burrow had partially disrupted the left foot.

Grave 25 (in the west of square A2/east of square Z2). The grave cut [196] was a sub-rectangular feature, with rounded corners, steep to near vertical sides, and a flat base. It was orientated southwest-northeast and was 2.04m in length, 0.73 m in width and 0.21 m in depth. The grave fill (197) was a dark brownish grey sandy silt with inclusions of sandstone fragments. The adult skeleton (SK198) was orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and was supine and extended with arms straight. There had been some disturbance by animal activity to the left arm and hand and the left foot. SF8 (a small copper alloy loop earring) and SF9 (a large copper alloy loop earring) were found by the right side of the cranium.

Grave 26 (in the east of square A2/west of square B2). The grave cut [183] was a sub-rectangular feature, with sub-rounded corners, vertical sides with slight undercutting to the west, and an irregular base that sloped up to the east. It was orientated southwest-northeast and was 1.90m in length, 0.60m in width and 0.20m in depth. The grave fill (184) was a dark brownish grey sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles, tile and sandstone and finds of pottery, animal bone and brick/tile. The adult skeleton (SK200) was orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and was supine and extended with arms straight. There had been disturbance of the right side of the torso, left arm and hand, and right foot by animal activity.

Grave 27 (in the southwest corner of square A2). The grave cut [205] was a sub-rectangular feature, with rounded corners, vertical sides to the west, south and north and gently sloping sides at the east, and a flat base. It was orientated southwest-northeast and was 1.74 m in length, 0.44m in width and 0.42 m in depth. The grave fill (206) was a mid brownish grey sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles, sandstone fragments and flecks of tile, and finds of pottery, animal bone and metal. The adult skeleton (SK207) was orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and was supine and extended, with arms straight. SF10 (a copper alloy loop earring) and SF11 (a fragmentary silver loop earring) were found by the right side of the cranium, and SF12 (a small copper alloy loop earring) was found by the left side of the cranium.

Grave 28 (in the southeast corner of square A2). The grave cut [201] was a sub-rectangular feature, with rounded corners, gently sloping sides and a flat base. It was orientated west-east and was 2.20 m in length, 0.86 m in width (although it was very slightly truncated to the south by the 2015 trench), and 0.30m in depth. The grave fill (202) was a mid brownish grey clayey silt with patches of light yellowish brown sandy silt, and inclusions of rounded pebbles, sandstone fragments and flecks of tile and daub, and finds of pottery, animal

bone and brick/tile. The adult skeleton (SK208) was orientated with their head at the west end of the grave and was supine and extended with arms straight. The lower legs and feet had been disturbed by animal activity and were located in the area of the femorae. The right side of the torso, hands, mandible and cervical spine had also been disturbed by animal activity.

Cremation Grave

Grave 22 (in the centre of square Z2). The cut of the cremation pit [179] was a sub-circular feature, with steep to near vertical sides, and a concave to flat base. It was 0.60 m in diameter and 0.20 m in depth. The fill of the pit (180) was a dark greyish brown sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles and finds of pottery and animal bone. The cremated bone (182) was contained within the remains of an urn ((181) SF2), which was sitting on the base of the cut and had been horizontally truncated by modern construction activity.

Post-Hole

Post-Hole 175 (in the centre of square A2). The cut [175] was a sub-circular feature with steep to near vertical sides and a concave, slightly irregular base. It was 0.80m in diameter and 0.25m in depth. The upper fill (176) was composed of a layer of rounded pebbles in a matrix of dark greyish brown sandy silt, with finds of pottery and brick/tile and was 0.12m in depth. The lower fill (187) was a dark greyish brown sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles and finds of pottery and brick/tile. In the centre of this fill was a post-void [185], which was sub-circular to sub-rectangular with rounded corners, steep sides and a slightly concave base. It was 0.30m in length, 0.30m in width and 0.10m in depth, although it had been horizontally truncated in the process of excavation. It was filled by (186), which was a dark greyish brown clayey silt, with inclusions of rounded pebbles and finds of brick/tile.

Pits

Pit 177 (in the centre of square B2). The cut [177] was a sub-oval feature with vertical sides to the east, steep sides to the west, slightly undercutting sides to the south, and a concave to flat base. It was orientated west-east and was 0.85m in length, 0.55m in width and 0.27m in depth. The fill (178) was a dark brownish grey clayey silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles and finds of a clay pipe bowl fragment. This pit was identified (but not given context numbers) and partially excavated in 2015, when it was found to cut the legs of Burial 19 (SK166).

Pit 191 (in the centre of square Z1). The cut [191] was a circular feature, with moderately sloping to vertical sides and a slightly concave base. It was 0.55m in diameter and 0.15m in depth. The fill (192) was a dark greyish brown sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles, which surrounded a horse skull and pedal phalanges (SF7).

Pit 203 (in the southeast of square A2). The cut [203] was a sub-circular feature with vertical to near-vertical sides, and a flat/irregular base. It was 0.90m in length, 0.77m in width and 0.20m in depth. The fill (204) was a dark brownish grey clayey silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles and finds of human bone and brick/tile.

Other Features

Uncertain Feature (in the west of square Z2). The number (199) was given to an ill-defined area of the trench, approximately 1.20 m north-south and 0.72 m west-east, composed of a mid brownish grey sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles and angular sandstone fragments, that contained a concentration of cremated bone fragments and unburnt horse bone. It is possible that these had been disturbed from the cremation graves 15 and 22, and the pit 191 during construction activity associated with the building of the solar park.

2007 Trench (to the north of squares Z2, A2 and B2). The cut [173] was a linear feature with small steps to the south, although the northern and western ends extended out of the 2016 excavation area. The south-east corner was square, the sides were vertical and the base was flat. As exposed, it measured 14.70m west-east, 2.07m north-south and was 0.50m in depth. The fill (174) was a mid greyish brown sandy silt with inclusions of rounded pebbles and finds of pottery, animal bone and human bone.

Site summary

The nine inhumation graves encountered in this season's excavation, all of which are orientated west-east, form part of the previously excavated 11th–12th century cemetery, with the silver earring (SF004) being very similar in form to those previously found. The graves are all cut through a Roman occupation layer associated with the villa rustica, which is situated approximately 10m outside the western edge of the trench. A number of the graves had suffered from some disturbance from animal activity. The one cremation burial was also similar in form to those found in 2007, although it had been very heavily truncated by modern construction activity, and seems to be part of the 8th – the first half of the 9th century cemetery. The post-holes formed a cluster in the north-east part of the trench and seemed to be in a curvi-linear alignment, with an outlier on the western edge. The majority of the post-holes are located in an area that is devoid of burials and this may suggest that they relate to a structure within the cemetery that was contemporary with the burials. One of the post-holes [157] did cut through a burial (Grave 11), although its appearance was different to the others and it may be modern in origin.

Potential for 2016 excavation season

-The excavation area should be extended to the east to further investigate the possible post-hole structure.

-The strip between the 2015 trench and the 2007 excavation area should be completely excavated, in order to resolve the alignment issues between the two areas and to "join-up" the excavations, ensuring all features are identified and excavated.

-The trench should be extended to the west to allow excavation of the grave cuts identified in 2014.

Note

- 47) Stanciu 2014, 325–327, 325 Fig. 1, 326 Fig. 2; Tucker, Stanciu et al. 2015; Tucker, Stanciu Et Al. 2016. For the roman structure see Diaconescu 2012. It is estimated that around 1000 burials remain to be excavated from the site.
48) Diana and meşter 2013.
49) Tucker, Stanciu Et Al. 2015; Tucker, Stanciu Et Al. 2016.

Informații suplimentare online

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