



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

HOMO - Journal of Comparative Human Biology

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jchb



The Osteological Collection of the University of Cagliari: From Early Neolithic to Modern Age



M. Sarigu*, G.U. Floris, R. Floris, V. Pusceddu

Dipartimento di Scienze della Vita e dell'Ambiente, Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Cittadella Universitaria, SS 554, Km 4,500, I-09042 Monserrato CA, Italy

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 27 January 2015

Accepted 23 December 2015

ABSTRACT

The Osteological Collection described in this paper is located at the Anthropology Laboratory annexed to the Sardinian Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the University of Cagliari. It has been created in 1953 by Carlo Maxia and comprises a large number of skeletal remains. At present the Collection consists of 11,854 human bones and continues to grow.

The remains belong to different periods, beginning from the Early Neolithic and continuing to the Modern Age. The aim of this work is to provide information on the composition of this collection after the reorganization carried out in the last years.

© 2016 Elsevier GmbH. All rights reserved.

Introduction

The study and conservation of skeletal remains have various purposes. They provide a scientific resource for the reconstruction of lifestyles of past people and for the identification of individuals in forensic cases (Kennedy, 1989). This heritage has to be shared with the community for educational purposes involving, for example, the organization of exhibitions of human remains in museums. In addition, research and anthropological museology contribute to value and preserve biological remains (Capasso, 2012). Skeletal collections preserved at universities have also made a significant contribution to the development of physical anthropology. For example, the traditional methods used in sex and age estimations of human skeletal remains have been based on documented skeletal collections (Brooks

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +39 3400726510.

E-mail address: msarigu@unica.it (M. Sarigu).

and Suchey, 1990; İşcan et al., 1984; Lovejoy, 1985; Lovejoy et al., 1985; Usher, 2002). The aims of this paper are: (a) to draw attention of the scientific community to the importance of the Sardinian biological heritage; (b) to underline the studies and research projects carried out during the last years; and (c) to describe the actual composition of the collection.

Materials and methods

Many specific skeletal collections within the Osteological Collection described in the present paper have been established by Carlo Maxia during his academic career. In 1953, Carlo Maxia (1907–1996), Professor of Human Anatomy at the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery and full Professor of Anthropology at the Faculty of Sciences (the University of Cagliari), founded the Institute of Anthropology and the Sardinian Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography. He spent his academic life studying paleopathological, paleobiological and cultural aspects of the Sardinian population from prehistory to the present. Currently, with the continuously increasing number of them, the skeletal remains have been housed at the Anthropology Laboratory annexed to the Museum, where also some of these remains are permanently exhibited. Unfortunately, there are no specific collections with complete individuals thus, in many cases, the reconstruction of sex and age at death is based on a single bone. There are two different types of specific collections: the collections of so-called “property”, related to archaeological excavations, donations and exchanges between researchers, and the collections obtained in the last years from the Soprintendenza Archeologica of Sardinia for research purposes.

Before the recent activities of reordering, restoring and cataloguing that occurred between 2010 and 2013 (Floris et al., 2012; Sarigu et al., 2014a) the number of human skeletal remains and the scope of related information were unknown. Only partial chronological, morphometric and historical revisions were previously done (Cosseddu et al., 1994b; Lodde et al., 2008; Sanna et al., 1999). The preliminary stage of this research concerned the recovery of historical documentation (slides, films, photographs, documents, papers) about the skeletal collection (Sarigu et al., 2014b). The original documentation, often illegible or extremely degraded, has been preserved in the archives with an annexed copy. Subsequently, this material has been digitized. The collections previously founded have been reviewed, while the skeletal remains coming from recent collections have been cleaned, restored and finally placed in sterile plastic containers for preservation (Fig. 1). During the cleaning steps, different types of brushes and spatulae have been used in order to make the material available for subsequent studies (Cronyn, 1992; Finzi Contini, 2003; Manzi and Salvadei, 1985; Sease, 1986). In some cases, such as remains from Sant’Elia (Cagliari), Perdalba (Sardara) and Cannisoni-Gastea (Seulo), due to the presence of encrusting material of unknown origin (probably copal) used previously for consolidation, it has been necessary to use ethyl alcohol and acetone (CH_3COCH_3) for cleaning. The fragments have been restored according to the standard methods (Borgognini Tarli and Pacciani, 1993; Canci and Minozzi,



Fig. 1. The Anthropology Laboratory of the University of Cagliari.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/100024>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/100024>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)