

Megalithic circles of Li Muri

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Human remains: "the Ozieri Ethnic group"

Based on current anthropological knowledge, it is known that in Sardinia the human Paleo-Sardinian morphology of the Late Neolithic age (3500-2800 B.C.), better known as the Ozieri ethnic group, originates from the encounter between two different human races belonging to the Ancient Mediterranean Neolithic: the Danube and the African-Mediterranean ones (fig. 1).



Fig. 1 - Cranial remains from the necropolis of San Benedetto di Iglesias
(from <http://dbs.unica.it/congressoaai/html/antropologia/images/05.jpg>).

The human types of the Ethnic Ozieri group were dolichomorphic, i.e. with broad shoulders, long torso, low to medium height, whose upper limbs were more developed than the lower ones; the same anthropomorphic features are found after all also in the ceramic fragments depicting the stylised facial features of the Ozieri people (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - Crenated bowl and pottery fragments with anthropomorphic patterns from the Ozieri Culture - National Museum "Giovanni Antonio Sanna" (from the Superintendence for Archaeological Heritage of Sassari and Nuoro, photo by G. Porcu <http://www.museosannasassari.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/100/i-reperti/14/porzione-di-ciotola-caremata-e-frammenti-ceramici>).

Because of the acidity of the granitic soil, it has only been possible to recover a few skeletal remains from one burial circle in Li Muri, too few to establish the human race and the number of individuals placed in each tomb (fig. 3).



Fig. 3 - The archaeological excavation (from Antona, Ceruti 1992, p. 22, fig. 1).

Among the coeval burial circles in Gallura, the only anthropological finding, for that matter not even certain, comes from two skeletons, a child and a brachycephalic adult, found in the central cista of the burial circle of Li Muracci of San Pantaleo Olbia, in the homonymous hamlet of Olbia.

The anthropological data concerning the alleged brachycephalic aspect of the area of Gallura, should this be confirmed by other findings, would further strengthen the hypothesis of the Culture of the megalithic circles coming into contact with the Eastern Mediterranean and the Italian peninsula and, at the same time, the independence of this cultural aspect from the contemporary culture of Ozieri.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Emanuela Atzeni

■ Bibliography

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