

Can we derive occupation from enthesopathies? Lessons from the Coimbra Identified Skeletal Collection

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Oral

Theoretically, identified skeletal collections with reference to occupation are a major value for investigating occupational stress markers. To evaluate how useful these are to infer profession we carried out, in 1995, a research on the Coimbra Identified Skeletal Collection, dated from the early 20th century (Cunha and Umbelino, 1995). One hundred and fifty one skeletons, 76 males and 75 females with known occupation were analysed in terms of enthesopathies, namely 31, according to the classification system proposed by Crubézy (1988). Our findings seem to support the statement that the role of occupational stress as a factor in enthesopathies is far from being unequivocal. Furthermore, we argue that the main problem is due to the lack of definition of the occupations, for both sexes, which can, in many instances, include a large variety of physical efforts and the impossibility to know for how long the concerned individuals practiced the referred occupations. The methodology applied (Crubézy, 1988) as also the problem of only considering proliferative lesions, which the formation of osteophytes.

Key words: Enthesopathies, occupation, 19th-20th century, applied study, Portugal

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