



List of abstracts

The hybrid globalisations of traditional Chinese medicine. An ethnographic analysis of practitioners in Milan.

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In the last two decades, the use of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has grown significantly both in Eastern and in Western countries. According to the World Health Organization, nowadays TCM is performed by more than 300,000 practitioners in about 100,000 Chinese medicine clinics in over 100 countries worldwide. Beyond its flourishing application, TCM attracts the growing attention of anthropologists. If International scholars have shown how, in China, the Western biomedical model highly influence both the academic teaching and the practice of TCM, specific studies within Europe, especially in Italy, are still lacking today. Based on an analysis of how TCM is practiced in the city of Milan, my aim is to scrutinize the relation between TCM and biomedicine and, broadly, between modernity and tradition. Through an ethnography conducted in Milan between November 2020 and May 2021, I explore the different ways of translating the knowledges and interpreting the practices by local TCM doctors. By means of interviews and observations of medical practices of ten different practitioners, my research led me to identify three different categories in relation to TCM practitioners in Milan: the “Purists”, the “Integrators” and the “Hybridisers”. Within this contribution, I focus on their similarities and differences, showing how TCM assumes the shape of a hybrid and localized practice.

Ambiguities and contradictions in the discursive negotiation of the ontology of psychiatric diagnoses

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The discussion on the nature of psychiatric diagnoses is a broad multidisciplinary field full of ever-negotiated ambiguities and unresolved questions. Are psychiatric diagnoses caused by nature or culture? Are mental disorders just brain dysfunctions or neurochemical imbalances? Does a psychiatric diagnosis mark deficit or difference? Against the mainstream conviction in both academic and popular circles, most of these questions are not answerable by scientific means. They are rather philosophical or ethical questions determined by our beliefs about what it means to be a self and a human being. There is a multiplicity of paradigms framing and narrating psychiatric diagnoses either as individual deficits or socio-cultural problems, or natural cognitive diversity, each coming with inevitable exclusions. I will track how the three main paradigms I distinguish in the discourse on the ontology of psychiatric diagnoses treat these and other essential questions. This debate does not point just to scientific practices. It is connected to many important anthropological themes like the nature/culture divide and the meanings we attach to these categories. It illustrates the complex and fluid relationships between biological, social, and technological and their significance in identity politics, and it also reaches the role of corporeality in modern personhood.

Multiple histories, one resistance: alternative perspectives for the interpretation of Brazilian indigenous ethnographic objects

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For some decades now, museum workers are trying to rethink their practices and conceptions to turn the institutions where they work into inclusive places of dialogue and production of shared knowledge. Ethnographic museums in particular are involved in a strong debate about innovative and more appropriate ways of treating objects, as to respect cultural ownership and reveal histories and narratives silenced by Western hegemonic perspective. In this paper I shall present three case studies concerning some objects belonging to Brazilian indigenous peoples and currently preserved in three European museums: a bamboo tablet used by Kambeba people of the Solimões river to flatten children's head and preserved at the Academia das Ciências of Lisbon; a version of the Porantim, sacred oar belonging to the Sateré-Mawé people and preserved at the Museu da Ciência of the University of Coimbra; a group of Mundurucu feather objects worn, in the past, by warriors during head-hunting ceremonies and preserved at the Weltmuseum of Vienna. The objective is to show how involving native representatives is a basic prerequisite to the implementation of any study. Indeed, it allows plural, diversified discourses to emerge around the objects, both in the attribution of cultural meaning and in their potential use as tools for a common fight for social, political, and territorial rights. Ultimately, the production and dissemination of alternative narratives inside and outside the space of the museum might have positive consequences in the "re-education" of the society and of the State in terms of civil and political inclusiveness.

Denouncing colonial injustice in Sápmi: Sámi artistic activism at the beginning of the 21st century

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At the northernmost fringes of Europe, Sápmi is at the core of current geo-political discourses centered on the global race for resources in a context of escalating climate change. This is the ancestral homeland of the Sámi people, the only indigenous peoples of Europe. Through centuries of colonial encroachment, Sápmi has been partitioned among Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia, which have since then been exploiting the rich local natural resources. In Arctic Europe, colonialism is not over but is still perpetuated, albeit in new and often subtler ways. Environmentally damaging infrastructures like mining, windmill parks, dams, other forms of land-grabbing as well as top-down regulations imposed upon Sámi peoples, restrict Sámi access to their own land or limit their ability to perpetuate culture-specific way of living and economic activities such as reindeer-herding. The pervasive effects of colonial processes have been met with forms of resistance that have taken various shapes and forms. In recent decades, Sámi politically engaged artistic expressions have gained a role of prominence in the articulation of indigenous Sámi resistance against the colonial overtones that still permeate Nordic societies. Art has become a locus of Indigenous contestations and as such it often addresses thorny topics such as stigmatization, colonial oppression, and asymmetric power relations by means of a strong visual language. Sámi art is gaining growing importance as a form of empowerment and Sámi artists are presenting their work not only in Fennoscandinavia but also around the world. For instance, for the first time since its establishment, in 2022 the Venice Biennale will host Sámi art in the Nordic pavilion.

In this paper I address specific Sámi artistic expressions that have had a prominent role in promoting Sámi causes in recent Sámi history both at a pan-Sámi and at a local level. Since Sámi festivals have been crucial arenas for the articulation of Sámi artistic expressions while also providing safe-spaces for the transmission of Sámi cultural values, the starting point of my reflection will be a local Márka-Sámi festival with strong political overtones: Márkomeannu. The paper, based on the materials I collected during a 16-month fieldwork and on interviews with Sámi cultural activists, addresses from an anthropological point of view how politically engaged "artivism" has become a means for Sámi people all over Sápmi to fight for a more inclusive Nordic society.

Softer Landscapes, Mossy Screens: Tumblr Natures

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An outcome of qualitative research exploring the terrain of nature-themed internet aesthetics and their communities on the Tumblr social media platform. This terrain presents a romanticized image of the non-human environment, reproducing colonial and nationalistic ideas about “pure” nature as a distinct site from culture. However, it also supports processes of queering nature and its re-enchantment that are entwined with making of empathetic kinships. Interviews with participants and study of shared content reveal complex ways of relating to the non-human online, using technology to create spaces of trans-species care as well as alienation in a time of climate crisis.

At Home on Zoom: Theatre Shows during the Quarantine Time

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This paper aims to analyze the totality of connections between space, performers and audiences created during artistic performances taking place on the Zoom platform during the lockdown. After Facebook & YouTube *live* events, these types of shows, most often theatre performances but also contemporary dances, poetry shows, concerts, or performance art, became one of the most popular artistic manifestations of March-May 2020. In conjunction with cultural institutions being closed and artists and spectators confined to their homes, the two-month lockdown led to the emergence of a *quarantine culture* marked by online artistic manifestations. What I call *quarantine culture* is a kind of *homemade culture* that involves art performances at home, a theme I have been studying for the past eight years. Here I take up the example of the HomeFest events, which, due to the pandemic, took place on the Zoom platform in 2020. Focusing on the online HomeFest, I examine the differences, as well as commonalities, between the work for a show created for the traditional stage or the black box and the work for the in-house productions broadcast online, where artists have adapted themselves to the domestic, as well as to the virtual space. I explore the interconnections between the elements of the zoom theatre performance (also read as *e-homemade culture*) questioning, as well the relationship between the final work and the cultural market which led to the emergence of *e-homemade culture*.

Movimento Negro in Salvador de Bahia: history of an alliance between things

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The nation-state Brazil is built on the foundations of the socio-economic hierarchy at the time of colonialism. The effects produced and perpetrated by the slave mentality are still visible and manifest today in the deep conditions of inequality experienced by local population. Salvador de Bahia called “the first African city outside Africa”, it's characterized by the high rate of occupation by Africans freed after the abolition of slavery in 1888. In fact, it's today the focal point of the contemporary local process of Africanization, or enhancement and re-discovery of the Afro-Brazilian component of the nation. The main social actor that promotes this political-cultural movement is the Movimento Negro.

This research aimed to study Movimento Negro's components and the macro dimension of local ethnic-racial conflicts. The focus is on techniques of response and resistance to dynamics of oppression by subordinate groups and on the relationship between bodies, space, time, and objects in the process of building the ethnic feeling of belonging.

This research project was conducted from July 2019 to December 2020. The first part was field research in Salvador de Bahia. Starting from the phenomenological concept of culture, frontal interviews were made using the camera. Different social actors were involved to understand political and cultural dynamics through their everyday life. The second part was a bibliography work.

In SSA the socio-economic gap between citizens takes on the connotations of ethnic construction and polarization between groups of individuals - brancos (“white people”) and negros (“black people”) - highlighting how ethnic construction is a social phenomenon, which is based on the conflict of access to resources.

This polarization is also manifested in the double of the city: the richest places where the residential buildings on brancos are located and the areas abandoned by the institutions and more dilapidated – such as the favelas – where negros used to live. Like this, space is also racialized: places in the city are called lugares brancos (“white places”) and lugares negros (“black places”). This is why Movimento Negro operates by filling the spaces: both the physical-material space of the city and the political and academic space.

Through the aesthetic manipulation of bodies, the aesthetic-visual diffusion on walls, in art galleries, museums, on billboards, musical and poetic production, this movement shows representations that enhance Afro-Brazilianity and claim equality between citizens.

Movimento Negro is not reducible to specific social actors but is characterized by being a hyper-object: an entity widely distributed in space and time, which can only be grasped in its concrete manifestations and accessible to human perception. It emerges from objects, bodies, walls with graffiti, local artistic-musical production, museum exhibitions and local performative poetry events and it takes up space. In fact, this political-cultural movement is configured as an alliance of things: living and non-living beings, and space-time together, showing the impossibility of separating the different entities, one from the other.

All this opens up new spaces for reflection and the need to question the epistemological assumptions on which the current academic-scientific production is based and, from a macro point of view, the same imperialist vision on which the global political-economic order of Modernity stands.

My children tell me I should not spend so much time on Facebook because I am old

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In India, the elderly—those above the age of 60—have been slowly catching up to the Internet: those who did not need to use the computer or the Internet until they retired from their professional lives, are doing so with the smartphone. Older persons who surf the Internet have found to experience increased feelings of social support and connectivity. Boosted by the cheapest internet connections in the world, India today has 504 million Internet users; the rate of female users, across all age groups, going up rapidly than male users both in urban and rural India. In the context of the existing research about older persons’ use of social networking sites and the role it plays in their lives, there has been little research conducted specifically in India, let alone any research that is focused entirely on older women’s use of this technology: about what they post, or what they consume. My research explores new forms of socialization among older women in India, through their engagement with Facebook on the smartphone. This opens the doors for a form of unintended everyday resistance: in making their presence felt on social media, they are reclaiming their own sense of agency beyond the ascribed markers of identity of age. This paper is from my existing research; this paper will specifically engage with the reflections from the research participants on how they navigate their time, their daily chores, their new online interactions, and possibly, their addictions to the smartphone and Facebook.

Towards household sustainability: food practices in suburban Netherlands

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This paper explores (sub)urban household food practices to better understand which tangible and intangible elements relate to sustainability. We conducted an ethnographic study with 12 Dutch households over a 7-month period, consisting of video and audio recording, in-depth interviews, food diaries and observations. The systematic organization and ecological and social entanglements of food practices were analyzed using practice theory, looking at meanings, materials, and skills. Several groups

with distinct food practice elements where derived from the data. Within these groups, we link tangible elements such as financial resources and infrastructural access to sustainable food options, as well as intangible elements such as social position and connection to nature. Concludingly, it is discussed how this data could shape future research in food practices to ultimately inform local level climate policy interventions.

Gastrointestinal parasites in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda - our latest findings and future research challenges

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Gastrointestinal parasites pose a significant health risk to humans, particularly in tropical regions. Oesophagostomiasis is a parasitic disease caused by nematodes of the genus *Oesophagostomum*, commonly referred to as nodular worms. The disease is characterized by nodular lesions in the intestines resulting from larval migration. It is a known zoonotic pathogen transmissible between humans and non-human primates (NHPs). Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (BINP), Uganda is home to approximately half of the world's population of endangered mountain gorillas. The area surrounding BINP is densely populated with livestock grazing and a limited buffer zone. Mountain gorillas are habituated for tourism and research, and therefore come into close contact with humans. The populations of Bwindi gorillas are known to be parasitized by *Oesophagostomum* and therefore could be a potential reservoir for infection. I will present our latest findings from BINP and analyse the potential implications of these. The second half of my presentation will highlight the challenges for primatology in the future. BINP is situated in South-West Uganda, one of the poorest areas in Uganda, yet the area which provides the greatest income from tourism. In this presentation I will address the future challenges for the field of primatology, infamous for its neo-colonial approach to research and dark history. As the future of primatology, we have the duty to face this uncomfortable truth and change how research is conducted. At present most research conducted on primates is carried out by western scientists from the global north, despite the home ranges of the world's primates predominantly residing in the global south. Helicopter research is a term used to describe research conducted by wealthy western scientists in countries in the global south and leave with their data and provide nothing in return to the local population. I will explore these challenges and present solutions for a more ethical future for primatology.

Radioulnar contrasts in the ridge counts in the context of prenatal sex differentiation

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Radioulnar contrasts (numerically: differences) between ridge-counts of individual fingers of the human hand have been identified as promising features in respect of prenatal signalling. In this study, we compared the results of a meta-analysis of intersex differences in radioulnar contrasts between published mean values of dermatoglyphic ridge counts on the fingers of the hand (calculated from the higher RC of each finger) with intersex differences obtained from radioulnar contrasts already calculated at the individual level.

Searching the NCBI-PMC, ScienceDirect databases, and archival resources, we found a total of 273 dermatoglyphic studies (after merging duplicates in databases). However, only 11 of those studies were suitable for meta-analysis after application of all selection criteria, including our own four studies. Considering the effort spent in searching for articles, we were able to find very few studies that published statistical parameters of ridge counts by individual finger and that would thus be suitable for studying contrasts between fingers. When statistical parameters have been published for individual fingers, they do not represent the descriptions of all ridge counts from the radial and ulnar sides of the fingers (i.e., 10 values on each hand), but only the ridge count with the higher value is selected for each finger (i.e., 5 values on each hand) at the individual level.

The meta-analytically obtained sex dimorphism (contrasts between the mean values of the ridge counts) are virtually indistinguishable from the dimorphism from the contrasts calculated at the individual level (means of the contrasts). However, the step of selecting one (higher) ridge count from each finger blurs the dimorphism and makes interpretation of the sex differences difficult. The results cannot then be compared with those obtained from the complete set of all ridge counts on the fingers. Combined with the small number of studies with suitable data published on a finger-by-finger basis, we therefore cannot recommend meta-analysis of published studies as a suitable means of studying interfinger radioulnar contrasts. For this purpose, primary/raw ridge count data at the individual level must be available.

Isolated skeletal remains of anatomic modern humans from Central European Upper Palaeolithic

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Isolated skeletal parts of anatomically modern human (AMH) are the most frequent finds at Upper Palaeolithic (UP) sites. The research was aimed on database of isolated AMH remains and the understanding and interpretation of these finds from selected Central European area, namely Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovak Republic, and Hungary. Beside their isolation, the AMH's skeletal remains are highly fragmented to such a degree, that it is often difficult to interpret the taphonomic processes causing such a state, especially if we expect results after the intentional human activities or accidental traces after other abiotic and biotic agents, e.g. erosion, bioerosion, anthropogenic or wildlife activities etc. The isolated finds are seldom colored by red ochre, grave goods are mostly missing and there are remnants of human activities in the localities, which prove the re-use of the sites. As a result, we can state, that the fragments of limb bones diaphyses prevails in the AMH material, although these bone types are represented by a lower amount at sites. If we take bone and tooth density into the account and compare it with a general morphology of individual skeletal parts, then the craniodental elements are more likely to remain preserved, which demonstrates a broader range of sites with their distribution, contrary to their lower skeletal element number if compared to the limb bones. These disposal traits we can observe within all main UP periods. However, slight decreasing number in limb and craniodental elements occurs in Magdalenian period.

Keeping the digital plates spinning – experience from a research expedition in Antarctica

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Technology advances changed not only the means of data collection and data handling practice but also protocols for data privacy and security in human sciences. However, these changes are increasingly dependent on internet connection and could be problematic in its absence. This creates a challenge for researchers who wish to work with modern and innovative methods in terrain with no internet connection. Some of these challenges are for example: combining traditional and modern research methods, selecting an off-line friendly technology and software, means of data collection, distribution and analysis with respect to personal privacy, ethics and well-being. This talk discusses some of these aspects based on experience from a research expedition in James Ross Island in Antarctica.

Growth of the Metacarpal Bones of Children from The Wrocław Growth Study

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Introduction: The human hand represents a morphological and functional complex that is sensitive to variations in ontogenetic factors. Hand development is genetically controlled, and the expression of these genes is influenced by a number of central and local controlling factors (e.g., hormones, cytokines) whose effect is modified by external influences, including socioeconomic status or the environment. All these factors can therefore influence the growth and development of the hand bones or their timing, which can be monitored during longitudinal studies and also recorded, for example, by means of X-ray images.

Goals: Our aim is to compare the timing of growth and growth curves of the metacarpal bones of the children who participated in the Wrocław Growth Study, using the length of the bone at the point of peak velocity, age at peak velocity, and more.

Materials and Methods: X-ray images of the left hand taken between 1961 and 1972 during the Wrocław Growth Study (a total of 435 girls and 425 boys aged 7 to 18 years) were scanned into two-dimensional images using a special scanner. Traditional and geometric morphometry (landmark methods) were used to quantify the size and shape of the bones and to analyse the proportions of the entire metacarpal region of the hand.

Results: In particular, detailed differences in the timing and completion of growth of individual metacarpal bones and the possible association of these differences with available anamnestic factors are expected.

3D assessment of bone microstructure and microdamage of violent injuries

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Bone tissue is a hard anisotropic organic composite material with complex interrelated arrangement of its structural elements at multiple scales. These characteristics condition the overall bone properties, such as its capacity to persist external forces, and thus determine the biomechanics of skeletal trauma and resulting bone damage. Therefore, comprehensive knowledge of bone microstructure and its variability in combination with assessment of bone microdamage characteristics is essential in understanding the process of bone biomechanics under the action of external forces. Up to now, however, the microstructure variability, microdamage characteristics in case of violent injuries and especially their relation has not been fully examined.

The present study aimed at imaging, describing, and analyzing of bone microarchitecture and skeletal microdamage, particularly the examination of microcracks, in the forensic settings. Ten cases of cranial gunshot trauma from real forensic and mock cases were scanned on GE Phoenix v|tome|x L 240 and Heliscan microCT. For each case, morphological and spatial characteristics of bone microstructure (for instance thickness, orientation, arrangement and branching of Haversian canals) and microdamage (for instance skeletal damage pattern; microcracks surface, volume, thickness, and orientation) were assessed using Avizo software.

The results were confronted with those acquired using calcified thin sections, which represented low-cost and complementary option to the microCT procedure. Here, additional to the basic characteristics the course of microcracks with respect to the Haversian systems, detectable in thin sections unlike our microCT data, was evaluated.

The results showed the morphological characteristics of bone microstructure with respect to inter- and intraindividual variability and presence of quantitative and qualitative differences of observed microdamage in various types of skeletal trauma.

The presentation will demonstrate the benefits of bone microstructure and microdamage assessment in the context of biomechanics of bone and skeletal trauma as well as the potential of observed distinctions of microdamage patterns in differentiating between types of skeletal injury

Does parental similarity degree affect the development of their offspring?

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Similarity in facial and other physical characteristics has been recognized as one aspect of reproductive mate choice in humans. Despite the fact that parental similarity degree may affect offspring already in the early stages of their prenatal development, just a very few empirical studies have focused on the consequences of this non-random process so far. This study included three goals: (1) to test the hypothesis of body assortative mating in humans, (2) to find a relationship between physical similarity of parents and the growth curves of their offspring and (3) to find specific trends in the growth of offspring connected to parental assortative mating. Therefore, the similarities of parents in physical features were analysed in relation to the descriptors of the growth curves of their offspring ($n = 184$ mother-father-child triads from the Brno Growth Study database). In comparison to randomly generated pairs, real partners were not more similar to each other in any of the observed trait. However, some physical features correlated (mostly positively) between partners. Relationships between physical similarity of parents and the descriptors of the growth curves of their offspring were found. However, parental similarity in various features affected the growth of their offspring differently.

Virtual approach to estimating stature from in situ skeletal length

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Stature is one of the key demographic characteristics analyzed in biological anthropology along with the age, sex, and ancestry estimation. Estimating stature helps the anthropologists to understand developmental differences between historical or recent populations or serves as an indicator of individual developmental well-being. Essentially, there are two ways to estimate stature: osteological methods based on bone measurements and in-situ measurement of the skeleton. The method of Boldsen (1984) represents the latter approach, since it estimates stature based on the distance between the farthest point of a cranium and the most distal point of talus. This method was designed to be performed in situ and is hardly replicable on photographs or sketches because the measurement must follow the curvature of the skeleton in the grave. We propose reproduction of this method using a combination of virtual 3D model of the grave and measuring tools. The aim of the study is to compare the estimation of the “virtual Boldsen” measurement and its alternatives to the “in-situ Boldsen” measurement and assessed the accuracy and usability of the 3D models for this method of stature estimation.

The studied sample consisted of skeletons excavated during the seasons 2020 and 2021 at the Anabaptists cemetery in Přebice dating back to the 16/17th century. The graves were measured in-situ and documented using photogrammetry software Agisoft Metashape Professional. The accuracy of the virtual measurements was assessed based on the repeated measurements and absolute (TEM = 0,79 cm) and relative (0,52 %) technical error of measurement. Subsequently the in situ and virtual measurements were compared in terms of average values and variability of errors (average error -1,59 cm). Since the virtual Boldsen measurement could be quite tedious, a simplified approach using a linear regression function was proposed.

