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The body, power, rights

Edited by

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Introduction

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The politics of adherence to antiretroviral therapy: between ancestral conflicts and drug resistance

Francesca Cancelliere

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Abstract

This article investigates the implementation of antiretroviral therapy (ART) in Maputo, Mozambique. Firstly, the author examines the enrolment procedures of medical professionals in health centres, which are intended to “produce” adherent patients. Secondly, through the exemplary case study of Joana, a young patient and her family, the author explores the zone of social abandonment (Biehl 2007) where vulnerable subjects become trapped, leaving little hope for adherence to therapy or other survival strategies. The author argues that the shortage of infrastructure, as well as other social forces, clash with the emergence of so-called ‘therapeutic citizenships’ analyzed from other anthropological studies since the introduction of ART (Nguyen 2010). Caught between the shortcomings of the health system and a violent family context, Joana’s body became a battleground for ancestral conflicts and a stark illustration of medical failure.

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, adherence, ancestral conflicts, health facilities, Mozambique

Corpi ibridi nel Giappone pre-moderno: uno studio attraverso le fonti letterarie e i bestiari

Diego Cucinelli

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Hybrid bodies in pre-modern Japan: a study based on literary sources and bestiaries

Abstract

The hybrid body is an extremely popular theme in Japan’s literature and visual arts that we can find in many genres and eras. Traces can be found in fairy tales, as well as in the early writings of the eighth century, the historiographies *Kojiki* (Records of ancient matters, 712) and *Nihon shoki* (The Chronicles of Japan, 720) and throughout all cultural history. In particular, it finds a high level of expression in the bestiary of the late Tokugawa period (1600-1867). Some hybrids derive from the cultural context of continental Asia, while others derive from the indigenous culture. There is also a huge number of typologies, from human / animal and human / vegetable hybrids to others that include non-organic elements. In this article we intend to provide an insight into this cultural heritage, focusing on the representations of hybrid bodies through the main literary and pictorial sources of pre-modern Japan.

Keywords: Japan, demonology, hybrid, pre-modern Japan, fairy tales, legends, literature, art, *yōkai*, embodiment, *tsukumogami*

La geometria dello stigma: HIV e biosocialità nel contesto dell'Emilia-Romagna

Alice Gattari

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The Geometry of Stigma: HIV and biosociality in Emilia-Romagna

Abstract

The article retraces the evidence in an ethnographic piece of research carried out in Emilia-Romagna in 2017. In particular, it explores and analyzes critically the phenomenon of HIV-related stigma. The experience of seropositivity brings out the complex biomedical, political and social stratifications which undermine and mould the collective representations and narratives of the disease. Stigma emerges as the gravitational center of the stories of many seropositive persons. Its geometry is a non-Euclidean one: the figures of stigma – explicit/implicit, real/perceived – recall the action of a dispositive, which can be both narrative – from the institutional perspective – and socializing – from the subjective experience perspective. As a result, the embodiment of these dynamics generates the need for a visible seropositive identity, which is strongly bound to a new and contradictory form of relationality that evokes the concept of biosociality. The outcome follows a path which is similar to a Möbius strip, where stigma remains constantly entangled as a dominant category.

Keywords: HIV, stigma, biosociality, biopolitics, identity

Genitalia out of scope. Riflessioni intorno a pratiche di cura e cittadinanza trans nelle sentenze di rettifica di attribuzione di sesso

Simonetta Grilli - Maria Carolina Vesce

p. 91

Genitalia out of scope. First notes on care practices and trans citizenship in Italian court judgements

Abstract

Court verdicts asked to deal with several aspects of trans experiences, are key objects through which we can frame the relationships between gender and the law (between heterosexuality and citizenship), showing how the hegemonic forms of heteronormativity underpin the constructions of citizenship. Looking closely at the proceedings, we will see that, until recently, the enduring trend was to consider the genitalia as the legitimate manifestation of gender identity: they were entrusted with the symbolic function of representing and certifying gender. Furthermore, such asseverating function was legitimated by the adaptation of their form or appearance (aesthetics), rather than their usefulness (functionality), which remains often partial (if not problematic). The law (and medical practices), in fact, tend to enlist or conform the trans condition to the binary gender order, conveying the belief that gender originates from sex, namely from paramount sexual characteristics.

Keywords: transgender citizenship, hormones, genitals, body, sex and gender, Court verdicts

Mizuko kuyō, o il transito della presenza

Nicola Martellozzo

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Mizuko kuyō, or the transit of the presence

Abstract

Since the 80s, the *Mizuko kuyō* has become one of the most widespread rituals in Japan. Performed by women who, after abortion, seek to relate their-self with the vengeful spirit of the fetus, this ritual is a very recent phenomenon, nevertheless historically rooted and integrated into Japanese Buddhism. The concept of *presence*, developed by Ernesto de Martino, and the paradigm of embodiment allow us to reflect on *Mizuko kuyō* as a critical moment for motherhood and the cultural construction of the person. The first part of the article describes an overview of Japanese ritual, highlighting the relations between biopolitics and gender dynamics, along with the principal historical and religious coordinates of the Japanese society. The second part analyzes the structural and transformative link between abortion, embodied suffering, and the ritual, in which the presence of *Mizuko* is re-oriented. The marginal and violent *presence* of the fetus is addressed to a physical and symbolic simulacrum, where the mother can find a new place to rebuild the relation previously destroyed by the abortion.

Keywords: *Mizuko kuyō*, abortion, crisis of presence, embodied suffering, gender agency

«Come farsi un corpo [...]». Analisi dei processi di produzione dei corpi migranti

Pasquale Menditto

p. 127

«How do you make yourself a body [...]». Analysis of the process of production of migrant bodies

Abstract

The Paris-Nord Humanitarian Centre was inaugurated by the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo in November 2016 with the aim of addressing the emergency of asylum seekers stuck in the streets of the French capital. The facility was functioning until March 2018, with approximately 66,000 people passing through its premises in almost two years of operation. In its first conception, the structure should have been limited to providing initial material assistance to people waiting for the *rendez-vous* for one of the registries for the application for asylum. However, few months after its opening, the system progressively shifted towards the function of selecting migrant subjectivities, considered legitimate within the practices of government articulated by the French institutions. In particular, the concept of vulnerability has come to be seen as discriminatory within the process of recognition of individuals in need of care, freeing them from the precariousness of the street life. In particular, vulnerability has ended up imposing itself as a discriminatory factor within the processes of recognition of individuals in need of assistance. As a consequence, this constituted the single bio-political index capable of ensuring any form of visibility. Beyond the alleged naturalisation of vulnerability, this paper will outline the mechanisms that produce vulnerability as a condition characterizing the body of migrants, starting from the analysis of the codification of the latter through biometric technologies, employed in the contemporary regime of mobility. For these reasons, ethnographic reports on the experience of some asylum seekers in the Parisian context shall be used to trace the effects of subjectification and de-subjectification caused by the relation with devices of power, such as the Paris-Nord Humanitarian Centre.

Keywords: bio-politics, Government, body, migrants, vulnerability

Body modifications, performative saying and politics: from the *veritas obsectorum* to the *veritas rerum*

Raffaella Sabra Palmisano

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Abstract

We are bodies, and we live constantly involved in the representation of corporeity. In contemporary society, this involvement is amplified by television, social networks, social media, representations of all kinds that remind us of corporeity. These representations of bodies testify to a continuous change of the bodies and of the conception of corporeity: a change that develops with socio-political (therefore cultural, economic, etc.) changes. But how “political” is the body of Man? How “political” is the language of the body? These are just some of the questions that arise from the very presence of countless images of the human body in every form and context. A body, influencing and influenced by the complex network of relationships built through what the author has termed “performative saying”, that is “the discourse of a knowledge, expression of the *Weltanschauung* of a certain society”. The body is therefore today more than ever itself a “political saying”, expression of the imaginary and therefore the field of experimentation and continuous changes. These practices of modification - implemented not only for medical, legal, religious and above all political purposes, practices that range from haircutting to amputation of limbs, through tattoos and scarification, etc. - can often be experienced by those who practice them as an approach to the reality of themselves in an attempt to “show what manifests itself from itself, as it manifests itself”. These practices also always characterize status transitions as well as manifest the will to be there and the very mode of this being there. Being inseparable from the historicity of those who practice them, these modifications have a political meaning in which the role of science cannot be ignored. The relationship between science, politics and body modifications is thus expressed, assuredly, in the corporeity of the cyborg and the mutant and in all the political imagery related to and as a result of them.

Keywords: body modifications, politics, ethics, performative saying, science

Modificazioni genitali, diritto di asilo e pratiche di cittadinanza Note antropologiche su un’esperienza di mediazione nei servizi

Maya Pellicciari – Sabrina Flamini

p. 175

Genital modifications, asylum right and practices of citizenship. Anthropological notes on a “mediation” among public services

Abstract

Ethnographic data collected during counseling and “intercultural mediation” encounters with women included in the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), are used by the Authors to propose some anthropological reflections about citizenship practices and the “remodeling” effects these practices produce on diasporic bodies. The so-called “FGM” (Female Genital Mutilations) nowadays are relevant to obtain international protection status and represent for women one of the few legal channels to access the “European fortress”: an access conditioned

to their capacity to “translate” and make compatible apparently incompatible body politics, taking advantage of the victimization and trauma code offered by the “humanitarian logic”.

This confirms once again FGM – even in migration contexts – as a dynamic and polyvalent device, able to produce new subjectivities but also further subjugations: what is at stake is also strongly affected by the active role played by the anthropologist, whose presence in the field is strategically important and should be constantly rethought and questioned.

Keywords: FGM, asylum seekers, refugees, citizenship, anthropologist role

Anticorpi di stato. Da figli di ‘ndrangheta a buoni cittadini

Marta Quagliuolo

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State antibodies. From youths of ‘ndrangheta to good citizens

Abstract

This article intends to present some considerations starting from the ethnography of a judicial measure. The research has attempted to analyse the modality of promulgating judicial decrees, dictated by the Juvenile Court of Reggio Calabria aiming at transforming youths of *‘ndrangheta* - whose psychophysical development appears to be compromised – into good citizens.

The State intervenes with the goal of “re-thinking”, “re-modelling” and “re-educating” underage kids from the psycho-social-cultural point of view. Only in this way youngsters become desirable citizens.

The author asserts that this change happens through a psychologizing process. Social Services make use of psychological instruments to achieve the inner transformation of the youths of the *‘ndrangheta*. So the psychologizing process makes the criminal mind a legal mind, as well as a promoter of good citizenship.

Keywords: *‘ndrangheta*, Juvenile Court of Reggio Calabria, State, psychologizing process, antibodies

Topico del cancro. Governo dei margini e margini della storia a Nord del Marocco

Federico Reginato

p. 219

Cancer’s topical. Government of the margin and margins of history in northern Morocco

Abstract

In the present work, by exploring the results of his fieldwork on historical and political dimensions of cancer pathology in the Moroccan Rif, the author suggests taking into consideration the “imaginary institution of society” (Castoriadis, 1975) that entangles peoples, landscape and health in this Mediterranean area. Here, cancer emerges as an historical legacy and as a hallmark of the local environment: the *signature* of years of economic misery, infrastructural and healthcare abandonment and land poisoning; a history that starts with the colonial use of mustard gas during 1921-1926 and that culminates in the political repression of the newfound social movement “Hirak”. Following the deep network of *carcinogenic relationships* through health politics and history, cancer emerges then as a biological disease, a socially stigmatized element but also as an historical language that translate the violent and controversial relationship of the inhabitants with the Rif region.

Keywords: Rif, cancer, Hirak, Hogra, history

Prendersi cura di sé e degli altri. Politiche della salute, migrazioni e bio-legittimità in Italia

Veronica Redini e Francesca Alice Vianello

p. 243

Taking Care of Oneself and Others. Health Policies, Migrations and Bio-Legitimacy in Italy

Abstract

On the basis of an ethnographic research carried out in Padua in this article, the Authors examine work-related health problems and the access to health care of migrant home care workers. The analysis focuses on exchange relations with employers and health services, showing how they intervene in favouring or inhibiting the fundamental right to health. As the Authors show, citizenship rights affect the possibility of taking care of oneself as well as others in the light of welfare policies and social recognition of care work in Italy today.

Keywords: migrant women, Home Care Work, employers, health policies, Italy

La libertà come incapacità? Note sulla riabilitazione come esercizio spirituale

Lorenzo Urbano

p. 265

Freedom in incapacity? Notes on rehabilitation as spiritual exercise

Abstract

Reading the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual*, the authority on psychiatric disorders, we can trace a very clear trajectory of the representation and conceptualisation of addiction as a mental disorder, towards the exclusion of social and cultural parameters and the consolidation of a stringently neurobiological perspective. Therapeutic interventions, however, such as those in residential communities for addicts, still attribute great importance to the social, relational, and personal dimensions of addiction. Drawing on the Author's ethnographic fieldwork in one such community, this article aims to explore the articulation of therapeutic practices through the lens of Pierre Hadot's concept of *spiritual exercise*, to reflect on the rehabilitation process as a way of remaking one's subjectivity.

Keywords: spiritual exercises, addiction, rehabilitation, moral subjectivity, moral incapacity