



Wednesday November 20th, 2024

Amphi Gintrac, Campus Victoire, University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux

16:00 19:00 Welcome of participants

17:00-18:30 General public conference (in French)

M. Pruvost, Génomes anciens, enfances perdues : Retracer la vie des jeunes dans les sociétés du passé - *Ancient genomes, lost childhoods: Tracing the lives of young people in societies of the past*

18:30-20:00 - welcome reception

Thursday November 21th, 2024

Maison de l'archéologie & Archéopôle, Bordeaux Montaigne University, Pessac

08:30 09:20 Welcome of participants

09:20 09:40 Introduction to the conference

09:40 11:20 Redefining concepts and methods to study the children of the past

09:40 A. Volk, Life History Theory from a Historical Perspective

10:00 **K. Squires et al.**, A multi-disciplinary approach to studying the Angioletti of Palermo: a case study exploring the benefits and challenges of interdisciplinary non-adult mummy research

10:20 **H. Shaw et al.**,"Tumbling up" during the industrial revolution: sex-specific health and growth patterns in children from the Coach Lane cemetery

10:40 **P. Blaževičius et al.**, When Beauty turns into a threat: the story of one girl

11:00 **O. Dutour et al.**, Quick death but hard signature: palaeopathology and the recognition of childhood mortality causes escaping the osteological paradox

11:20 - 12:30 Coffee/tea break & posters session

- **1. L. Balj,** Revealing childhood in Prehistory: an interdisciplinary approach to interpreting prehistoric miniature ceramic artefacts
- **2. A. Cavaré,** Prevalence and patterns of dental agenesis in the Sains-en-Gohelle collection (Pas-de-Calais, France, 7th-16th centuries CE)
- **3. D. Coutinho Nogueira et al.,** Preserving the past: integrating advanced techniques in the study of a Final Mesolithic child burial at Cabeço da Amoreira (Muge, Portugal)

- **4. S.-P. Gilson et al.,** Once upon a time, there were children in the Brazilian southern coast archaeological settlements
- **5. M. Le Luyer** *et al.*, Identifying and characterizing physiological and environmental stressors impacting childhood in Neolithic societies: investigating stress proteins in teeth
- **6. C. Libor et al.,** The crown you never take off. Non-adult burials with "párta" from Szécsény, Hungary
- 7. M. Lucas et al., Infant death during the Iron Age: the case of El Palomar (Oliete, Iberian Peninsula)
- **8. T. Majo et al.,** Interdisciplinary methodological proposal for the study of the funerary treatment of the early chilhood of the Catalan nobility of the 14th century buried in the monastery of Santes Creus (Aiguamúrcia, Alt Camp, Catalonia, Spain)
- 9. A. Volk, Adolescent bullying in western history
- **10.A. Zinn et al.**, Identification and evolution of rickets and scurvy therapeutics between the 17th and 19th centuries CE: archaeo- and palaeopharmacological approach

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 15:40 Early tales from bones and muscles

14:00 **L. Coiffard et al.**, Ships' boys, nippers and powder monkies: skeletal evidence for life at sea at an early age from the Stray Park British Naval Cemetery (Plymouth, U.K.)

14:20 **K. Swan et al.**, Functional advantages of cortical bone front-loading during early growth and locomotor development

14:40 - 15:40 Keynote

A. Ireland, How muscles shape the growing skeleton?

15:40 - 16:10 Coffee/Tea break

16:10 - 17:30 Goods, games or toys, what makes a child a child?

16:10 **V. Losyte**, From child to citizen: toys in ancient Greek rites of passage

16:30 **S. Juarez**, Unseen but ubiquitous: Children in the Preclassic Maya community of Noh K'uh

16:50 **C. Libor et al.**, Another brick in the wall - Different perspectives of child burials from Avar Period, Hungary

17:10 **M. Licata et al.,** Children of the past. The bioarchaeological discoveries of Santa Maria Maggiore in Vercelli

20:00 Conference dinner

Friday November 22th, 2024

Maison de l'archéologie & Archéopôle, Bordeaux Montaigne University, Pessac

09:00 09:20 Welcome of participants

09:20 11:00 Early life experiences and the mother-infant relationships

09:20 **O. Nechyparenka & C. Aris**, Unveiling early-life stress: a histological analysis of dental stress markers

09:40 **M. Le Luyer et al.**, Baby teeth as biomarkers of childhood growth: interdisciplinarity insights from the STRONG study

10:00 **M. Lourenco** *et al.*, Early life survival challenges in Modern Lisbon (17th-19th centuries), Portugal

10:20 **C. Feuillatre** *et al.*, Isotope analysis through the ages: from tracking breastfeeding in past populations to tackling the modern obesity epidemic

10:40 **J. Beaumont** *et al.*, Keep it in the family: what can modern sibling studies tell us about weaning behaviour?

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee/Tea break

11:30 - 12:30 Keynote

J. Provasi, The influence of the maternal environment on fœtal learning

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 - 15:00 Early life experiences and the mother-infant relationships (continuation)

14:00 **E. E. Peacock et al.**, Entrance to the kingdom of God - at all costs. Finds of hidden, coffined foetal burials in Swedish churches

14:20 **M. Guillon et al.**, Why bury together? Funerary expressions of death during gestation and childbirth in catholic and protestant populations in 18^{th} century la Rochelle

14:40 **J. Estivals et al.**, Enamel hypomineralisations in children: a current and historical enamel anomaly

15:00 - 15:20 Coffee/Tea break

15:20 - 17:40 Displaced lives, impact of forced or voluntary migrations on children

15:20 **J. de Mello Moraes**, Children as future subjects of the monarchy and their education and functions during the Portuguese colonization of South America

15:40 **S. Rodríguez Caraballo et al.**, Children from the first European settlement in the Canary Islands, San Marcial del Rubicón

16:00 **L. Vilumets & Ü. Aguraiuja-Lätti**, Fragile lives of immigrant children – multidisciplinary analysis of non-adult skeletal remains from the 18th century garrison hospital cemetery in Tallinn, Estonia

16:20 - 16:40 Coffee/Tea break

16:40 **K. Delucia** *et al.*, Children's burials and structural violence in colonial Mexico

17:00 **A. Fofana Leon & N. Da Graça Jaime**, Children in Southeastern Africa: medicine, enslavement and the trade in Enslaved "Mozambiques," 1752-1800

17:20 **M. B. Krause & T. A. Tung**, Childhood in the Wari Empire: a bioarchaeological exploration of weaning, dietary patterns, and locality in a Middle Horizon (600-1000 CE) Andean community

17:40 - 18:00 Conclusive remarks

Invited speakers' communications

Conference for the General public

Ancient genomes, lost childhoods: Tracing the lives of young people in societies of the past

Mélanie Pruvost^{1*}

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Palaeogenomics, the discipline that studies ancient genomes, has revolutionized our understanding of past societies. Recent advances in this field allow us not only to trace migrations and interactions between populations but also to reconstruct entire aspects of prehistoric and ancient societies, including their kinship relations and general health. But what about the children, who have often left few tangible traces for traditional archaeological research? This conference aims to explore what the genomes of the youngest members of these communities reveal about their status, social roles, and the practices they were subjected to. Through concrete examples, we will discover how ancient DNA sheds new light on the place of children throughout time, from the Palaeolithic to Antiquity.

Dr Mélanie Pruvost is a researcher at the CNRS and a member of UMR 5199 PACEA. She is a palaeogeneticist specialised in the study of human and animal populations. Coordinator of the Ancestra ANR project (2015-2020), she is particularly interested in the settlement of France from the Mesolithic to the Early Middle Ages. She is also working in collaboration on the study of the evolution of the genetic diversity of certain animal species under anthropic pressure, in particular domestication.

Keynote

How muscles shape the growing skeleton

Alex Ireland^{1*}

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Due to the short levers muscles work with, the skeleton experiences large muscle forces equivalent to several times bodyweight during physical activity. Bones readily adapt their size, shape, and structure in response to this loading. For example, adolescent tennis players have 40% more bone in their racquet than non-racquet arm, whilst children born breech (and therefore less able to load the skeleton through kicking) have 10° higher femoral anteversion. Prenatal movements, and those associated with acquisition of motor milestones in infancy, appear to have large, persisting effect on skeletal development. In addition, the pattern of bone adaptation to loading seems highly sex and maturity specific, and for some parameters is maintained decades after cessation of activity. Therefore, physical activity at different stages of childhood may leave distinct evidence in skeletal remains, even in those individuals who reached adulthood.

In this talk, I will present findings from study of living models of human loading and skeletal health across the lifespan by our group and other colleagues in the field. We will discuss how new techniques and findings in contemporary living populations can confirm and validate archaeological research into children's lives, and in turn how archaeological study can inform modern science and medicine.

Dr Alex Ireland is a Reader in Musculoskeletal Physiology at Manchester Metropolitan University. His primary research interest is in bone adaptation to mechanical loading across the lifespan, with a broader interest in musculoskeletal growth and ageing. He is currently funded by an Orthopaedic Research UK Fellowship, and is using machine learning to develop a 3D ultrasound system allowing easier imaging of bone and joint shape in younger children.

Keynote

The influence of the maternal environment on foetal learning

Joëlle Provasi^{1*}

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The intra-uterine environment offers the foetus a multitude of vestibular, tactile, somato-sensory, auditory, vocal, musical, rhythmic and even multi-modal stimuli. All these stimuli can vary according to the mother's activities. In the same environment, the foetus is able to perceive this wide range of stimuli, process the information, store it in its memory and discriminate between it and a new stimulus. It is also able to produce numerous motor actions, both rhythmic and non-rhythmic. The foundations of learning and memory are laid in intra-uterine life. We will also look at the role of sensory-motor synchronization in interaction and communication.

Joëlle Provasi is a senior lecturer at the École Pratique des Hautes Études and a member of the RNSR 200515259U CHArt laboratory. She is a psychologist and neuroscientist, interested in the rhythmic synchronisations of very young children interacting with their environment. She has taken part in four ANR programs, Premalocom 1 and 2, Neolocom and Memotime, focusing on children's psychomotor development and memory. She is co-inventor of a patent (no. 3637807: Device for assisting the crawling of an infant), the crawliskate marketed by VIPAMAT. She is taking part in a research program looking at motor training in high-risk preterm infants.

Podium presentations

Life history theory from a historical perspective

Anthony Volk1*

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A common application of life history theory to human psychology (labelled LHT-P) argues in harsh and/or unpredictable environments, humans adopt "fast" life history strategies consisting of "fast" behaviour like low parental investment, early mating, and risky behaviour. These behaviours, along with accelerated pubertal development, are argued to be an adaptive way of avoiding a failure to reproduce due to early mortality. LHT-P has relied almost entirely upon data from industrialised and developed (i.e., modernised) societies that have shown small, but significant, links between harsh environments and "fast" behaviour/pubertal development. To further explore the evolutionary validity of this hypothesis, I examine data from historical, archaeological, and hunter-gatherer sources. These data show that past incidents and cues of mortality were highly prevalent, direct, and often interrelated, and that caloric limitations and inter-intrasexual competition placed constraints on the use of fast life strategies in response to challenging environments. In both hunter-gatherer and historic populations, harsher and more unpredictable conditions led to a "slow" life history strategy where: a) growth and menarche/spermarche were delayed, b) reproduction was delayed due to energetic constraints and behavioural choices; c) overall fertility was reduced due to energetic constraints and behavioural choices; d) direct parental investment was as high as local energetics would permit. The reverse was largely found for wealthy/high status individuals who translated their more benign living conditions into earlier sexual maturity and growth, earlier reproduction, greater total reproduction, and the co-opting of paid or slave labour to provide alloparental care for their larger pool of offspring. Thus, past data support the largely opposite pattern of fast-slow life history strategies as what is predicted by LHT-P and refute data from modern countries that link harsh environments with "fast" behaviour and puberty. I will discuss alternative explanations of modern life history patterns that better fit with historical data. I will also emphasize the often overlooked, but highly significant, value of historical data when testing evolutionary hypotheses.

A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Studying the "Angioletti" of Palermo: Case Study Exploring the Benefits and Challenges of Interdisciplinary on-Adult Mummy Research

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The largest assemblage of mummies in Europe can be found in the Capuchin Catacombs in Palermo, Sicily. This internationally renowned site contains the mummified and partially skeletonized remains of approximately 1,284 individuals, of which at least 163 have been identified as non-adults. A multi-disciplinary research project focusing on 43 late modern (1787-1880 CE) nonadult mummies was launched in 2021 with the aim of learning more about the demographic composition of minors in the Capuchin Catacombs, their health status at the time of death, and the mummification rite itself. A multidisciplinary team, comprised of bioanthropologists, radiographers, a radiologist, and an orthopaedic surgeon, was assembled and, through the use of radiography, a greater insight into non-adult demography, health and disease, and mortuary rites afforded to these young individuals was obtained. Alongside a summary of the project's main findings, this presentation will explore the benefits and challenges of interdisciplinary non-adult mummy research, much of which is directly related to other contexts that involve the study of juvenile bioanthropology from archaeological and forensic contexts.

"Tumbling Up" during the Industrial Revolution: sex-specific health and growth patterns in children from the Coach Lane Cemetery

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Within the past decade, the study of children and childhood has become an important research theme in the field of bioarchaeology. In studying the skeletal remains of children, bioarchaeologists gain unique insights into the social structure, health, and cultural practices of historical populations. However, a key variable is often missing from the bioarchaeological record of children – sex. Prior to puberty, the secondary sexual characteristics of the skeleton are not yet developed, which makes it difficult to estimate the sex of the individual. Analysing how children of different sexes experience varying health and growth patterns aids in interpreting historical social structures and behaviours.

In 2014, the complete excavation of the Coach Lane cemetery (c. 1711-1857 AD) yielded 81 non-adult skeletons. Previous studies have extensively documented the pathological conditions and growth patterns observed in the non-adult individuals from Coach Lane. However, this study is the first to integrate the analysis of childhood health with sex-specific data obtained through dimorphic enamel peptide analysis. In total, 64 out of the 81 non-adult individuals had at least one tooth suitable for dimorphic enamel peptide analysis, spanning ages from ante-natal (36-38 weeks in utero) to late teens (16-17 years at death) (male = 30, female = 34).

This study not only enhances our understanding of childhood health in the past but also demonstrates the potential of combining bioarchaeological and biochemical approaches to address longstanding questions about sex-specific health patterns in non-adults. The application of this method to children in the past equips bioarchaeologists to explore questions related to sex-dependent cultural treatment of infants and juveniles, including questions related to identity, weaning, infanticide, childcare, and puberty. The findings contribute to a deeper comprehension of how historical, social, and environmental factors influenced childhood health and development during the Industrial Revolution.

When beauty turns into a threat: the story of one girl

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In 2014, a previously unknown 17th-century burial site was discovered during reconstruction work on a section of the Lithuanian railway. Archaeological investigations soon followed, uncovering at least 164 burials, about half of which were children. Among these, a well-preserved burial of a girl, estimated to be between 5 and 10 years old, was found with a richly decorated headdress. This intricate adornment dramatically altered the course of her story. Following hurried documentation through photographs and drawings, the girl's head was removed, and her body was handed over to anthropologists. After research, her body was reburied in the local community cemetery, while her head, adorned with the ornate headdress, was sent to the National Museum of Lithuania. After preliminary conservation, it was stored in the museum vaults. Nearly ten years later, during preparations for an exhibition on childhood in the past, the artefacts from this burial site were revisited. The head attracted renewed attention, revealing not only the skull and jewellery but also preserved hair and soft tissue under the head ornament. This prompted comprehensive interdisciplinary research and raised the question of reinterment.

This paper will present both bioarchaeological and analytical data and interpret this case from an ethical perspective.

Quick death but hard signature: palaeopathology and the recognition of childhood mortality causes escaping the osteological paradox

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The osteological paradox (Wood et al., 1992) posits that rapidly fatal diseases leave no trace on the skeletal remains and that palaeopathological observations primarily indicate morbidity. This principle, epitomized by the adage "Better health makes for worse skeletons," questions the validity of palaeoepidemiological approaches in identifying causes of rapid mortality, particularly in childhood. Indeed, according to Wood et al. (p. 367): "Infant and childhood death, when it occurs, happens guickly without leaving any hard-tissue signature" in cases of low general resistance. According to this model, markers of pathological conditions are only visible, in the archaeological record, for more resilient children, whose diseases lasted long enough before death. This presentation aims to demonstrate that the osteological paradox is not an absolute rule, by providing specific examples where paleopathology can detect the subtle yet distinctive signatures of rapidly fatal diseases in children. This is achieved through an extended knowledge of medico-historical literature and detailed morphological analyses of bone remains, including the use of uCT and 3D palaeoimaging. Three case studies exemplify this approach: acute osteomyelitis, tuberculous meningitis, and Thomas Barlow's disease. These are all childhood fatal conditions whose prevalence is significantly underestimated in palaeopathological research, partly due to the influence of the osteological paradox dogma.

Wood James W., Milner George R., Harpending Henry C., Weiss Kenneth M., 1992. The osteological Paradox: Problems of Inferring Prehistoric Health from Skeletal Samples. Current Anthropology 33 (4): 343-358.

Ships' boys, nippers and powder monkies: skeletal evidence for life at sea at an early age from Stray Park British Naval Cemetery (Plymouth, UK)

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During the era of the British Royal Navy in the 18th and 19th centuries, young boys made up a significant portion of the crews on warships. The Navy recruited these boys from as early as 6 years

old, with the goal of providing them with many years of training. They received instructions on board, the youngest spent most of their time playing, while the older ones worked. As they grew older, the boys had to take on more and more sailor's duties. However, historical documents do not provide precise details on their activities. Nevertheless, this early exposure to seafaring activities can be observed through skeleton analysis.

This study presents the results obtained for the non-adult individuals found in Stray Park cemetery

in Plymouth (Devon, UK). This site was used to bury sailors who had died in the Royal Naval Hospital from 1762 to 1824. The analysis of 38 individuals, aged between 7 and 24 years old has revealed potential activities performed by these young sailors and allowed discussion regarding the evolution of their duties.

Our results allowed us to show that, from childhood, muscle attachments leave traces on the bones, allowing them to be studied. However, these results also highlighted the need for an enthesopathic study method adapted to non-adults' skeletons. Age, laterality and enthesopathy location were found to play a predominant role in the formation of these activity markers. These data on potential activities, coupled with previous studies on diet, pathologies and trauma, coupled with archaeological and historical data, have ensured a far more comprehensive and developed understanding of the lives of these young sailors aboard British Royal Navy ships during the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition to bringing these young individuals lives into view, this approach also holds wider potential for studies of child labour in general.

Functional advantages of cortical bone frontloading during early growth and locomotor development

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The structure of long bone diaphyses changes throughout life in response to a variety of factors including metabolic, hormonal and mechanical environments. The first year of life is a physiologically challenging life stage involving changes in the pattern and frequency of mechanical loading as children learn to walk alongside increasing energy demands to support rapid growth. Here we examine postnatal trends in cortical bone structure in relation to key motor milestones and wider life history context.

Data were collected from a documented archaeological series of children (N=86) aged from birth to 7 years from 18th and 19th London. Micro-CT scanning was used as a non-destructive method for visualizing and measuring internal bone structure at the midsection of unfused femora. Changes in bone modelling during growth were assessed using medullary index (the ratio of medullary area to total subperiosteal area) and porosity index (the ratio of cortical porosity area to cortical bone area). Each variable was plotted against chronological age and a segmented regression applied to estimate the number of inflection points and age at inflection.

Both medullary and porosity indices exhibit non-linear trends. The proportion of cortical bone is relatively high at birth with low intracortical bone porosity. A rapid restructuring occurs indicated by an increase in relative medullary area and cortical bone porosity until 6 and 7 months respectively. The results lend support to the notion of a high proportion of cortical bone at birth that offers functional benefits to the infant by providing a mineral reservoir to support rapid growth while facilitating an optimised configuration of bone distribution for the onset limb loading behaviours such as crawling. Restructuring coincides with the age at which complementary foods are typically required to meet the energy demands of the infant suggesting a complex inter-play of variables occurring at mid-infancy.

From child to citizen: toys in Ancient Greek rites of passage

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In ancient Greece, children engaged with a variety of toys that reflected different stages of childhood. Infants typically played with rattles, while little older both boys and girls enjoyed toys such as balls and knucklebones. Knucklebones were particularly popular among young girls approaching marriageable age, who played games like pentelitha. Boys also participated in knucklebone games, often during 'breaks' at the palaestra or simply on the streets. Over the past two decades, research into ancient toys has significantly increased. Scholars have focused on archaeological discoveries revealing a substantial number of toys within sacred sites. A wide range of toys and game-related objects, including dice, dolls, spinning tops, rattles, and even gaming tables, have been unearthed at numerous Greek temples. However, the presence of these items raises questions: Were they solely dedicated to deities, or did they also serve as children's playthings within the sanctuary? Is it possible that these toys were manipulated by children before being consecrated?

Children held significant roles within sanctuaries, for example Pausanias (2nd c. A.D.) mentions children with sacerdotal functions in some sanctuaries, like in the sanctuary of Artemis in Sparta where young girl, Parthenos, were priestesses. Additionally, ancient Greek iconography depicts young girls and boys accompanying priests during sacrificial rituals. This raises another question: Can we establish a link between the toys found in sanctuaries and children's participation in sanctuary life?

Sanctuaries served as social spaces for children and adolescents, as evidenced by various ancient texts. By examining the sanctuary as a social space for children and adolescents, including their play, we can better understand their transition to adulthood through rites of passage, during which toys, possibly consecrated to youth-related deities, might have played a significant role. Through an analysis of textual, iconographic, and archaeological evidence from diverse ritual contexts, we aim to explore the significance of toys, particularly knucklebones, as objects that accompanied individuals from childhood into adulthood, or beyond in cases of premature death.

Unseen but ubiquitous: children in the Preclassic Maya community of Noh K'uh

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This paper considers the elusive presence of children in the Preclassic Maya region. Specifically, I discuss my research at the site of Noh K'uh, located in the Lacandon rainforest of Chiapas, Mexico. Despite extensive excavations revealing a dearth of direct evidence such as toys, figurines, or anthropomorphic depictions, the influence of children is implied through the presence of household activities. Furthermore, ongoing collaborations with the modern Lacandon Maya, who actively preserve the site, have provided invaluable insights into traditional indigenous lifestyles. Lacandon household practices offer a compelling parallel to ancient lifestyles, where children are integrated into all aspects of community life. Lacandon children do not exist in a separate sphere; they participate in household duties and accompany their parents in daily tasks. They engage with their environment creatively, often combining chores and play.

The absence of child-specific artifacts suggests that ancient Maya children, similar to modern Lacandon children, did not require toys for entertainment and may have been involved in adult activities. In the Preclassic Maya region, images of children are scarce and limited to drawings of anthropomorphic beings. Excavations at Noh K'uh indicate that anthropomorphic images were suppressed during this period of incipient urbanization. The lack of explicit references to human beings in the material culture raises significant questions about family structure. At Noh K'uh, the largest archaeological projects are linked to landscape reformation, rich in fertility symbolism, suggesting that the expansion of families was an important aspect of incipient urbanization.

By integrating ethnographic observations with archaeological data, this study provides a nuanced understanding of the social dynamics within the Preclassic Maya community, highlighting the often-invisible role of children. This research underscores the value of indigenous practices, revealing how modern Lacandon lifestyles can help interpret activity patterns similar to those of the ancient Maya.

"Another brick in the wall": different perspectives of child burials from Avar Period, Hungary

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The study of children and childhood in Hungarian archaeology is a growing discipline offering many opportunities to widen our understanding of past societies and populations. The migration period in the Carpathian Basin, characterized by numerous movements of populations with different origins, provides a rich context for such research. During the second half of the migration period (6-9th centuries A.D.), the Avars established an empire in, that affected the entire territory of the Carpathian Basin. This pre-Christian era featured burial customs included grave goods, with elements of clothing often surviving.

Our presentation focuses of child burials of four Avar cemeteries (Bodajk, Csákberény, Tiszakürt, Babarc) which are at different geographical locations. After completing the archaeological and anthropological analysis of these cemeteries, we conducted geospatial analysis of burial locations within each cemetery.

The changes in the grave goods by age groups are also provide invaluable insight into social perceptions of childhood during this period, particularly in reference to age at which gendered patterns in grave goods match those seen in adult burials. Also, it can be established that contrary to the preconceptions that double burials represented mothers and infants, who died during or shortly after childbirth, there were older children in these burials. Additionally, we explored the complex issue of determining the relationships between individuals and understanding the varying causes of death in double and multiple burials, seeking new interpretive frameworks for this funer-

ary practice.
The research was supported by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office (PD 146612).

Children of the past: the bioarchaeological discoveries of Santa Maria Maggiore in Vercelli (Italy)

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Bioarchaeological funerary contexts are able to reveal the social condition of children. From the analysis of grave goods, the location of burials within the cemetery space, and human remains, it is possible to explore the condition of children from social, economic, and health points of view.

Santa Maria Maggiore is the co-cathedral of the city of Vercelli commissioned by the Jesuit order in 1734 and designed by architect Filippo Juvarra. Originally, the church was dedicated to the Holy Trinity; however, in 1773, the nearby church of Santa Maria Maggiore was demolished, and its dedication was transferred to the current building. For this reason, it is thought that the osteological remains found in the ossuaries of the cemetery largely come from the original Santa Maria Maggiore church.

The underground cemetery of Santa Maria Maggiore is contemporary with the above church, but during archaeological examination, remnants of earlier wall structures were found, suggesting that an underground space already existed before the building of the church.

The cemetery has been studied by our anthropological division from a bioarchaeological point of view since 2020, with research still ongoing.

The study conducted on the child sample (12 individuals) is very interesting as it has found pathological lesions indicative of nutritional deficiencies which seems at odds with the belonging of these children to noble families.

We present the results of this bioarchaeological research and compare biological and historical archival data which has allowed us to bring out some hitherto unknown elements about the children of 18th century Vercelli.

Unveiling early-life stress: a histological analysis of dental stress markers

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Stress markers in teeth provide valuable insights into an individual's early-life experiences and developmental conditions. Since teeth form in early childhood and do not significantly remodel throughout an individual's life, they can provide an insight into their early-life developmental conditions.

An emerging methodology in this field is thin section histology. This technique allows us to observe microscopic structures within teeth, including stress markers formed in different hard tissues during a period of systemic stress. By analysing these markers, we can gain a deeper understanding of people's life histories from a young age.

This study investigates the presence and timing of such stress markers in the dentine and enamel of 16 disarticulated permanent teeth from the Keele University Skeletal collection, including four tooth types – incisors, canines, premolars, and molars. The methodology involved detailed microscopic examination and chronological mapping of the stress indicators within the dental tissues, which was achieved with the aid of histological examination. The stress markers analysed were interglobular dentine in dentine and Wilson Bands in enamel.

Preliminary observations indicate variability in the formation and severity of childhood stress markers in teeth. The timing and intensity of enamel (non-specific) and dentine (nutrition-related) stress markers do not always coincide. This already suggests that enamel stress markers may not be as non-specific as previously thought as they appear to not fully correlate with those forming due to nutritional stress.

By analysing these markers further, including cementum analysis and a larger sample size, we aim to further deduce and compare the periods in the individuals' childhoods when they experienced negative conditions.

Baby teeth as biomarkers of childhood growth: interdisciplinarity insights from the STRONG study

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Baby teeth (also known as deciduous, primary, milk teeth) record an individual's pre- and postnatal development, growth rates, and physiological responses to exogenous disturbances. The Stories Teeth Record Of Newborn Growth (STRONG) study has been investigating how the Boston Marathon bombings and manhunt in 2013 affected dental growth and development in children who were exposed to these events in utero or during infancy. Our goal was to understand how baby teeth might record traumatic events.

The STRONG study integrates knowledge and methods from biological anthropology, archaeology, dentistry, epidemiology, epigenetics, psychology, and clinical fields. Our team collected over 900 baby teeth from more than 200 participants and has established that ensuring the quality and reliability of dentally derived data is crucial, especially for large-scale applications. We evaluated checklists returned alongside the teeth collected; we performed external, micro-CT, and histology analyses on a subsample of teeth; and we examined inter-rater reliability of external feature scorings and accentuated line ratings. Here, we present some preliminary work and key lessons learned from this first round of analyses.

We found a high level of parental engagement in reporting information about their children's teeth, but only moderate accuracy in identifying which tooth was donated. We developed a scoring sheet for external dental features that can be prioritized to initially characterize teeth in biobanking, dental, anthropological, epidemiological, and other studies. We proposed a workflow for accentuated line ratings to Improve Reliability and Reporting In Scoring of Stress-Markers (IRRISS). We developed a standardized and accessible method for 3D dental tissue segmentation and tools for analysing micro-CT scans of teeth using Dragonfly software.

Results related to the bombing are forthcoming, but our interdisciplinary team has already generated significant insights into how to better utilize, analyse, and understand baby teeth to inform childhood in the present, past, and maybe future.

Early life survival challenges in Modern Lisbon (17th-19th Century), Portugal

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Child mortality in central Lisbon during the early Modern period was alarmingly high; infectious diseases were common and often fatal for young children, increasing the mortality rates. The city was densely populated with unsanitary environments that facilitated the spread of infections. The diet was frequently deficient, leading to malnutrition and making pregnant women and infants particularly vulnerable to illness. Medical care was elementary and lacked the necessary resources, techniques, and hygiene standards.

This study presents preliminary bioanthropological results focusing on the palaeopathology of 250 non-adult individuals from the S. Domingos children's necropolis of Lisbon, dating to the late 17th to early 19th centuries. The ages at death ranged from 30 weeks in utero to 2.5 years, estimated through dental calcification and eruption. Macroscopic examination revealed many bone alterations, including new bone proliferation, porosity, bone density loss, and congenital anomalies. These alterations were observed in 24% of the individuals with medium to severe intensity; 29% exhibited slight evidence, while 47% showed no skeletal changes.

The paleopathological study of children reflects the historical impact of diseases on vulnerable groups. It helps to understand the prevalence and sheds light on how these issues were managed historically, providing valuable data that can improve current medical and anthropological research. This sample reflects the profound challenges of an urban population in central Lisbon before vaccines or antibiotics, which gradually improved throughout the 19th century. Thus, we aim to contribute to deeper comprehension of the continuous interplay between health, environment, and culture.

Isotope analysis through the ages: from tracking breastfeeding in past populations to tackling the modern obesity epidemic.

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Nutrition during the first 1000-days of life from conception has a profound and long-lasting impact on the health and development of children and by extension the society they live in. As such early life nutrition is a central component of global public health policies today, while the study of children's health, growth, diet and life expectancy are key areas of bioarchaeological research. Isotope analysis is now routinely used to establish how babies were fed in the past. Recent technological advances to analyse incrementally growing tissues like teeth have helped refine the method, but the origin of nitrogen and carbon isotope ratios as a mean to reconstruct infant feeding practices lies in the pioneering work of Marilyn Fogel with modern infants which first drew attention to the trophic effect between breastfed babies and their mothers. While isotope analysis is a valuable tool to establish dietary behaviours, there are still uncertainties surrounding the physiological effect of growth and nutrition in early life on isotopic values, which has implications when interpreting isotopic data in relation to breastfeeding and weaning, but also provides an opportunity to identify malnutrition and by extension health risk during this key developmental period in both modern and past populations. This paper presents an inter-disciplinary project using data from contemporary mother/baby dyads to improve the interpretation of archaeological isotopic data and explore the potential application of an archaeological technique to tackle contemporary health problems.

Keep it in the family: what can modern sibling studies tell us about weaning behaviour?

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Breastfeeding and weaning behaviour are a topic of interest in both archaeology and anthropology: prolonged breastfeeding has health implications for both mother and infant and can influence the birth spacing between siblings. In past studies, averaged values from bone and dentine collagen carbon and nitrogen stable isotope ratios have been used to estimate breastfeeding and weaning duration in populations, often with small sample numbers over a long period of cemetery use. Each individual mother/infant pair will have many influences on this behaviour and their underlying health, and without knowing what these might be, the interpretations of the isotope ratios from these tissues should be tailored for each individual rather than attempting to assign population behaviour. The Bradford Tooth Fairy project (UK) and associated deciduous dentine data from Sudanese and Indonesian modern children has shown the wide variety of patterns that can be identified even in a cohort.

Here we present incremental dentine collagen isotope ratio profiles from 9 modern sibling groups (between 2 and 4 in each set) for whom breastfeeding and weaning data is known, including a set of non-identical twins. The data show both breastfed and non-breastfed patterns within sibling groups and allow us to examine how the birth order may affect the data, whether there is any gender bias and how stress may be identifiable. The data raises questions about the interpretations made in the past about this important period of life and will help to inform future studies using this methodology.

Entrance to the kingdom of God - at all costs. Finds of hidden, coffined foetal burials in Swedish churches

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Miscarriage was a stigmatised subject during the 18th and 19th centuries, and although it must have been a common feature in many women's lives, it is a relatively unexplored subject in archaeology.

Several coffined foetal remains have been found in churches in West Sweden during building renovations. Often these small boxes go unrecognised as this find category is largely unknown among archaeologists and antiquarians as well as in the Church of Sweden.

These finds are witness to the now-forgotten custom in Nordic Europe of burying foetal remains in small boxes and deliberately concealing them in or around churches in the hope that these tiny unbaptised souls enter the kingdom of heaven. Each provides a snapshot of how even very young foetuses received a dignified and carefully arranged burial in consecrated ground, even though this was an act in defiance of the Law of the Church of Sweden. These small boxes commonly contain not only the naturally mummified skeletal remains of early-term foetuses but also the textile shrouds in which the individuals were wrapped. The excellent preservation enables detailed observation of features and presents the opportunity to gain insight into the factors that contributed to preservation.

This presentation will introduce the interdisciplinary study of these finds focusing on three case studies. These investigations have enabled a detailed reconstruction of practices related to the handling and burial of pre-term and stillborn foetuses in the period around 1800. The results reveal not only the feelings of grief and loss that a miscarriage evoked, but also raise questions of a more existential nature about personhood and when a foetus was considered an individual – if at all.

Why bury together? Funerary expressions of death during gestation and childbirth in Catholic and Protestant populations in 18th-century la Rochelle.

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Burials associating a very young child with an adult are not uncommon in French cemeteries during the modern period. In some cases, these were pregnant women, with the foetus located in the pelvic cavity. In other cases, the mother and child most likely died during childbirth. The foetus, having emerged from the mother's womb, was buried with her in the same grave, often in the same container.

The number of archaeological finds of these burials does not reflect the reality of these simultaneous deaths, and it is difficult to quantify them because maternal and infant mortalities are often studied independently. At the same time, the funeral treatments observed for these deceased reveal a distinction that raises questions about the perception of death during gestation and childbirth. To what extent is the burial of a pregnant woman considered as a double burial? How does modern society view these deaths? And when the birth leads to a double death, what criteria are used to allow a double burial of mother and child?

In 18th-century La Rochelle, these two types of double burial were present in both Catholic and Protestant cemeteries, discovered in recent excavations (between 2010 and 2023). Although they did not function in accordance with the same requirements and restrictions linked to different conceptions of death, the presence of these burials could reveal a particular and irregular treatment chosen according to criteria specific to the biological identity of the deceased and/or the time elapsed between the death of mother and child. Compared with other French examples, these burials provide an opportunity to discuss mother-child mortality and the different burial practices that arise from it. This paper proposes to cross-examine results from history, archaeothanatology and biology (DNA sex identification and family ties).

Enamel hypomineralisations in children: a current and historical enamel anomaly

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Enamel hypomineralisations of second primary molars (HSPM) and first permanent molars (MIH) are qualitative anomalies in dental enamel development. These HSPM and MIH present as white, beige or brown discolorations on the tooth surfaces. Children affected by this condition experience heightened sensitivity, particularly in their first permanent molars. Consequently, adequate brushing of these teeth is challenging, promoting rapid development of carious lesions and leading to dental anxiety with frequent visits to the dentist. The cause of these conditions remains unknown, and there are currently no means of prevention. Some authors suggest contemporary factors such as endocrine disruptors or repeated antibiotic intake as potential causes. The current global prevalence averages 6.8% for HSPM and 14.2% for MIH. A French study highlights a prevalence of 9.5% for HSPM and 18.9% for MIH. In 2017, the discovery of MIH and HSPM in the medieval series from Sains-en-Gohelle (France, 7-17th centuries) challenged these contemporary etiological hypotheses. A comprehensive visual examination of this archaeological series, including children aged 2-18 years, identified 55 second primary molars and 28 first permanent molars displaying demarcated enamel opacities. However, diagnosing hypomineralisation in archaeological collections remains subjective as these conditions can be mistaken for post-mortem taphonomic discolorations. Micro-CT and X-ray fluorescence analyses were conducted to diagnose and establish the first prevalence of HSPM and MIH in a historical population. These results were compared with current prevalence rates, thereby reigniting a discussion on the aetiologies of these hypomineralisations.

Children as future subjects of the monarchy and their education and functions during the Portuguese colonization of South America

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Portuguese colonisation in America involved the presence of children from different socioeconomic groups and ethnicities. Perceived as developing and malleable, children received the attention of the political and ecclesiastical hierarchy. Based on various documents produced between the 16th and 18th centuries, as well as historiography, this study aims to analyse the use of children in colonisation, intending to reflect on the dynamics established between the various colonial social configurations and the governance of children. From forced displacement to the use of boys as interpreters in relations with indigenous people of Brazil, those involved in administration, economic activities, and the church found diverse meanings and uses for children. The understanding of children as future subjects of the monarchy prompted concerns about their education, as well as the creation of rules, provisions, and legislation pertaining to infants within the Portuguese empire. Unravelling the educational and labour practices developed by and for children, connecting them with the context and social configurations, allows us to glimpse both the roles attributed to childhood and the possibilities of children's self-determination in those scenarios. Thus, this proposal aims to focus on childhood and the various connections established by boys and girls in colonization, going beyond the family scope that is often prioritised in historiography. The main hypothesis lies in the valorisation of children at the dawn of modernity in parallel with the territorial expansion of European monarchies.

Children from the first European settlement in the Canary Islands, San Marcial del Rubicón

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San Marcial del Rubicón was the first European settlement in the Canary Islands. In 1402, the Normans conquered the island from this location, located on the southern coast of Lanzarote, next to the beach and ravine of Los Pozos (Yaiza). This site, unique in its historical significance, was excavated in the 1960s, 1980s, and, more recently, in the last three years. In these campaigns, archaeologists have identified, in addition to the cemetery, fortified spaces, places of habitat, water wells, and the place occupied by the "cathedral." Recent archaeological research has also identified a new necropolis where at

Recent archaeological research has also identified a new necropolis where at least 10 individuals (6 adults and 4 children) were buried. We will present the study of these four children buried in the site.

This settlement experienced a single moment of occupation that developed throughout the 15th century, during which the same space was inhabited by indigenous and foreign populations, who maintained their cultural traditions. Studying the children from this site allows us to better understand European contact societies' formation with previous Indigenous ones, especially aspects of family life and the integration of children's groups in these mixed societies. All the excavated occupation strata contain, in significant proportions, both fragments of indigenous ceramics and imported vessels. It is, therefore, a privileged scenario to learn about the daily life of a frontier society. Within it, the presence of children allows us to address numerous questions about their role and significance in this new colonial society.

We will present the preliminary results of these children individuals' anthropological and genetic studies, including age and sex determination. The anthropological study estimated the age by measuring cranial bones, long bones, and the degree of development and dental eruption. Sex was determined through genetic analysis. We will also discuss what insights these children can provide us about the society they were part of.

Our aim with this study is to identify the main characteristics of these children and to discuss why they were in this settlement and the implications within the colonization process. Also, we will discuss the relationship between the characteristics of this settlement and their premature death.

Fragile lives of immigrant children. Multidisciplinary analysis of non-adult skeletal remains from the 18th century garrison hospital cemetery in Tallinn, Estonia

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During the Great Northern War (1700–1721), Tallinn fell under the rule of the Russian Empire. Part of the new ruler's strategy was to establish the town as an important military harbour and as a result it became home to a large number of military personnel and their families. Historical records concerning the lived experiences of the children in this new population are limited. However, archaeological rescue excavations have revealed that in the course of the 18th century, many of them died an untimely death and were buried at the Russian garrison hospital cemetery. To shed more light on the health and wellbeing of these children, a multidisciplinary investigation (including palaeopathological and stable isotope analyses) was carried out on the skeletal remains of 64 non-adults (<17 years) recovered from the site.

Multi-isotope analyses of carbon, nitrogen and sulphur from incremental dentine were conducted on six non-adults (aged between one and six years) to investigate childhood diet and migration patterns. Comparative data were drawn from rib samples of six females and ten males from the same population. Results suggest that these individuals shared a roughly similar diet to the contemporary local inhabitants of Tallinn. Some children displayed evidence of absent or very limited breastmilk intake, which evidently made them more susceptible to developing metabolic diseases. Palaeopathological evidence suggested a link between vitamin C deficiency and insufficient breastmilk consumption in at least one case. Poor diet of children was further reflected by the presence of lesions suggestive of scurvy for eight more skeletons. Eleven individuals displayed evidence of dental enamel hypoplasia, indicating a physiological stress episode. In addition, a single case of possible rickets and signs of cribra orbitalia were also evident among the sample. No signs of respiratory diseases other than a single case of maxillary sinusitis were detected.

Children's Burials and Structural Violence in Colonial Mexico

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The study of children in prehispanic central Mexico is inherently interdisciplinary. Archaeological research recovers children's objects, spaces, and burials: bioarchaeological research tells us about their health and wellness during their short lives; historical documents give us insights into adult beliefs and understandings about children in the past; and ethnography helps us to interpret the archaeological evidence and understand continuities and change over time. In this paper we study children's burials in ancient Mexico and look at both cultural and biological changes resulting from the cultural disruption and trauma caused by colonialism in the indigenous community of Xaltocan in the northern Basin of Mexico. Using multiple lines of evidence including archaeological and biological data, we compare prehispanic children's burials to colonial burials in the church cemetery. Osteological analyses show a significant increase in illnesses and trauma and decline in health among children during the colonial period compared to the prehispanic period. We also consider the social impact of the disruption to traditional burial practices by the introduction of Christianity. In the prehispanic period, when young children died they were typically buried in houses under floors and in walls, which protected them in the afterlife and was essential to the construction of group identity, social memory, and continuity. With the introduction of Christianity, burials were moved out of the home and into the churchyard, leaving deceased children apart from their families, without protection in the afterlife, and disrupting the social transmission of household identities. Ultimately, we argue that declining measures of children's health resulting from colonialism as well as the imposition of Christian burial practices are both forms of structural violence and would have disrupted the social fabric of colonial Xaltocan by upsetting conceptions of memory, identity, and social relationships.

Children in South-eastern Africa: medicine, enslavement and the trade in Enslaved "Mozambique," 1752-1800

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The research paper interrogates the complex relations between medicine and enslavement to which the enslaved south-eastern African children were subjected during the second half of the 18th century. This includes uncovering medical practice in the south-eastern Africa trade in enslaved persons linked to the analysis of the experiences of the children who entered the trans-Indian Ocean and trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved south-eastern Africans - commonly known as "Mozambique." While doing so, this research paper pays particular attention to the connected histories of bonded "Mozambique" children who were retained on the south-eastern African coast and villages, and those who were transported to the enslaving zones located around the port towns of Cape Town, Bordeaux, Cap-Français and Havana, as is evident in archival repositories, historical records of trading houses, and history project databases.

Research project "Crossing Memories of Mozambique and its Diasporas"

Childhood in the Wari Empire: A bioarchaeological exploration of weaning, dietary patterns, and locality in a Middle Horizon (600-1000 CE) Andean community

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This paper uses an anthropological bioarchaeological approach to examine stable isotope data to reconstruct juvenile weaning, diet, and migration. Through the analysis of stable carbon and oxygen isotope data from enamel carbonates and bone collagen, this study builds a preliminary understanding of the process of childhood-making and enculturation of individuals from the site of Auguimarca, affiliated with the Wari Empire (600-1000 CE) in the pre-Hispanic Andes. The site, located in the department of Junín, is composed of 126 tombs with 103 individuals present. Based on δ^{15} N in bone collagen it appears that infants living at Auguimarca were weaned between three and five years of age. Moreover, a statistically significant increase in δ^{13} C in enamel carbonates from infancy to middle childhood was observed (t=-2.4; df=131; p=0.02), suggesting maize as a weaning food. Generally, stable carbon isotope findings from enamel carbonates suggest a homogenous childhood diet premised on ¹³C-enriched foods, presumably maize. Finally, non-local individuals were identified by outlier stable oxygen isotope values in enamel carbonates. Five individuals buried at Auguimarca spent all or a portion of their childhoods in regions with distinct isotopic compositions of water sources. Based on the analysis of stable oxygen isotope data, it is evident that children exhibit varying patterns of residential mobility throughout different stages of their childhood and possibly into adulthood. All of these lines of data are considered together to better characterize the process of socialization and the lives of children in the ancient Andes.

Poster presentations

Revealing childhood in Prehistory: an interdisciplinary approach to interpreting prehistoric miniature ceramic artefacts

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In this presentation I will discuss an interdisciplinary approach to the interpretation of miniature ceramic artefacts. The largest number of these are small vessels which resemble the dishes that were used at the time. There are also miniature figurines of animals and people, ritual objects, rattles, small ceramic pellets and balls. Although some of these items were finely crafted, the majority display average or very poor artisanship skills.

Miniature ceramic artefacts are very common archaeological findings on prehistoric settlements in the Central Balkans - they date from Neolithic to Iron Age, and it is estimated that they are between 2000 and 7000 years old. In the attempts of the interpretation of these objects there are several different points of view. Some scholars see them as ritual objects-mostly offerings, others see in them objects for some special purpose and some interpret them as children's toys, but very often they are just marked as objects of unknown purpose.

In this paper I will present an interdisciplinary approach which I developed in an attempt to prove that the majority of these miniature artefacts can be interpreted as children's toys. I have found the theoretical background in anthropology and pedagogy and combined it with analysis of ceramic finds that includes careful observation of their shape and traces of manufacture and use, which can be seen on their surface, as well as by analysis of their archaeological context. Additional confirmation was provided by forensic analysis conducted on some artefacts that have preserved children's fingerprints on them. These artefacts enable us to see what it was like to live in prehistoric times, providing us with valuable information about growing up in ancient societies.

Prevalence and patterns of dental agenesis in the Sains-en-Gohelle collection (Pas-de-Calais, 7th - 16th centuries)

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The congenital absence of teeth, defined by the term dental agenesis, is estimated to affect nearly one-quarter of the current global population. The preferential involvement of terminal teeth in each dental class (lateral incisors, second premolars, and third molars) has inspired several evolutionary theories. However, this supposed increase in the prevalence of agenesis is weakly documented by paleo-epidemiological studies, due to diagnostic issues and poor preservation of jaws. The significant variability in reported frequencies can be attributed to inter-population and methodological variations, particularly the frequent absence of radiological control.

To reliably document this developmental anomaly, we combined several diagnostic criteria in a medieval series composed of immatures and young adults: semiological comparison with patterns frequently encountered in our orthodontic practice, cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) radiology, and analysis of abrasion facets on three-dimensional surface acquisitions. By studying 229 specimens from the Sains-en-Gohelle collection (Pas-de-Calais, France, 7th - 16th centuries), we established the prevalence of dental agenesis at 16.4% in the maxilla and 23.1% in the mandible, across all teeth, which is comparable to current rates.

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Preserving the past: integrating advanced techniques in the study of a Final Mesolithic child burial at Cabeço da Amoreira (Muge, Portugal)

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During the 2023 excavation season at the Mesolithic shellmidden of Cabeço da Amoreira (Muge, Portugal), a child's burial was discovered in the area previously excavated by Jean Roche in the 1960s. The skeletal remains had become exposed due to sediment erosion caused by weather conditions, the site's slope, and the activity of wild animals. A salvage excavation allowed for the recovery of numerous bones in their original positions, still in anatomical connection, including those of the pelvis, thorax, upper limbs, and cranial skeleton. Some lower limb bones, as well as the left ulna and radius, were also recovered, although displaced by taphonomic processes. Associated faunal remains, clay, and charcoal were also found.

Radiocarbon dating confirmed that the individual belonged to the Final Mesolithic period, making this burial one of the oldest found (and dated) at Cabeço da Amoreira. To complement traditional archaeological and anthropological methods, advanced imaging techniques were employed for the digital preservation and detailed study of the burial and skeletal elements. On-site photogrammetry enabled the creation of a 3D model of the preserved burial parts. Additionally, micro-computed tomography was used to refine the osteobiographic data. The micro-CT images of the dentition allowed for precise observation of the calcification stages of the teeth, indicating that the child died around the age of 7.5 years (± 12 months).

This burial is distinct from the others at Cabeço da Amoreira due to the evidence of a prepared structure on which the body was placed. This discovery expands the findings of non-adults' burials uncovered in recent years, providing a deeper understanding of young individuals within this hunter-gatherer population from both biological and funerary perspectives.

Once upon a time, there were children in the Brazilian southern coast archaeological settlements

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Brazilian Southern Coast archaeological sites are diverse and include domestic, funerary, and food processing contexts. Children's remains have been found in several of them. Except in Rio do Meio, a processing site, they are generally found in burial contexts. Their presence has different implications for the role of these individuals in their own society. We will use Pedra de Amolar (a funerary site) and Rio do Meio (a processing place) as examples to address this role. We have dental remains for both cases, as other bone remains were not available due to taphonomical, archaeological, and cultural reasons. Following Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994) and AlQahtani's methods (2010), we successfully obtained age results of 18 deciduous teeth in Rio do Meio and 4 in Pedra de Amolar. The range of the children found go from 5 to 10 years of age. We were able to study parameters of oral health such as the presence or absence of hypoplasias, as well as other indicators like the presence or absence of attrition and cavities.

Our research allows us to propose some interesting thoughts about children's place in these communities. On the one hand, being in funerary contexts implies they are considered part of society and deserve a similar treatment to adult individuals. There are even some other sites where grave

goods have been associated with children, showing possible status implications such as them belonging to a particular social class or their importance within the community. On the other hand, having children's teeth in a processing site allows us to think about their presence in productive activities, maybe as part of a learning process. In this case, the existence of deciduous teeth with partially resorbed roots could result from certain fishing practices documented in present societies in the region. This practice involves holding the fishing net with the anterior teeth creating a strong tension on them when the net is deployed. Such tension could be responsible for the premature extraction of the teeth with partially resorbed roots. Furthermore, these findings might also help us rethink some of our archaeological interpretations regarding the material culture when children come into the picture.

Identifying and characterising physiological and environmental stressors impacting childhood in Neolithic societies: investigating stress proteins in teeth

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The Neolithic transition introduced major shifts in critical aspects of human evolution: socio-economy, culture, biology, demography, and epidemiology. Among the major modifications observed, the Neolithic agricultural revolution is associated with a change in diet and cooking practices; a decrease in human stature, robustness, and teeth dimensions; an increased population density; an overall deterioration in health conditions, including a higher prevalence of pathologies, physiological stress, and growth disturbances. However, this major toll on human health has been evaluated by non-specific indicators of stress, and it is unclear which stressors might be responsible for all the physiological and health shifts observed in Neolithic human populations. Deciduous and permanent teeth offer the possibility to evaluate stressors experienced by an individual from in-utero to childhood and adolescence. During their formation, dental tissues record both physiological and psychopathological disturbances. In particular, accentuated lines visible in microscopy can provide a detailed chronology of stress experienced. With the exception of the neonatal line indicating the moment of birth, the cause of accentuated lines cannot be specified for past individuals.

In the NeoStress project, we are testing the feasibility of a new line of investigation that will allow us to detect stress proteins in teeth and, thus, identify and quantify specific stress responses at the molecular level. By combining histology, micro-CT, and proteomics workflow involving bottom-up strategy on teeth from contemporary and Neolithic individuals for which we know sex, kinship, and life history events, we are evaluating two stress proteins: heat shock protein-70 (HSP70), expressed in response to stress and particularly sensitive to physiological and external environmental stressors; and C-reactive protein (CRP), secreted in response to inflammation and infection. With this innovative approach characterizing stress proteins, the NeoStress project aims to identify specific stressors that have affected human life and health at the beginning of farming.

The crown you never take off. Non-adult burials with "párta" from Szécsény, Hungary

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In 2019 an excavation of the middle and northwest segments of a 17-18th centuries cemetery from Szécsény (Hungary) has been undertaken. The graves were relatively rich in finds and this essentially reflects post-medieval trends and help us to study the social connections and status. Among the 296 graves 38% were associated to non-adults, which phenomenon as commonly found in the medieval, and post-medieval eras. Regarding the artefacts of the cemetery, there were more than 30 so-called "párta" in the graves. The "párta" is a headdress that is characteristic primarily in Hungarian and Slavic areas. This item had an important message and means of expression during the Middle Ages and the Modern Age as well in the Carpathian Basin. Párta (corolla) is associated with unmarried girls and during the wedding its ablation had an important act.

In our poster, we are focusing on further analysis of burials associated with "párta", to establish their association with the age of the individuals, and other items found in the graves. Biological anthropology has its limits and we cannot determine the biological sex of a child's skeleton. Due to the lack of proteomics and DNA analysis, when specifying the gender, we can only rely on the possibilities provided by archaeology. The research of "párta" graves helps in this question, because this specific artefact is strongly connected to girls' wear. For all these reasons, we primarily consider every grave in which there was a "párta" as a young girl burial. It is particularly interesting to examine the age of the individuals with "párta", and to compare them with the other items we found in the graves, for example hairpins. In addition, it is also important to analyse the spatial location of the graves in the cemetery to find possible groups. We are looking for the answer to what additional meanings the "párta" could have used in funerary context, in addition to the previously known meanings.

Infant death during the Iron Age: The case of El Palomar (Oliete, Iberian Peninsula)

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In Western Europe, during the Iron Age, while most individuals were cremated, some perinates were buried in urban contexts. However, although this phenomenon was widespread, not all individuals who died around birth may have been buried. A specific selection process could determine which individuals were buried in these urban contexts.

El Palomar is a settlement from Oliete (Aragon, Spain) dated to the 3rd century BCE. From the original settlement, only a block formed by 11 houses and four warehouses surrounded by four streets is preserved. 17 perinates were discovered in seven houses, and six of these were concentrated in Room 24. This concentration provides an opportunity to investigate the common factors that influenced their selection for burial. Macroscopic, microscopic and biomolecular investigation techniques were applied to determine the biological profile of these individuals and to get insights into their conditions of life and death. Specifically, dental developmental stages and measurements of long bones have revealed that 16 of these individuals died at an age of 38 and 40 weeks of development, while one was a 16-weeks-old foetus. By applying synchrotron propagation phase contrast micro-computed tomography (scan resolution: 3 µm pixel size), the neonatal line was reliably identified in the tooth germs of at least three individuals. The palaeogenetic analyses showed the presence of both sexes, the absence of chromosomal abnormalities, and the lack of kinship between these individuals.

This multi-proxy study allowed us to better characterize these perinates (e.g. age-at-death, sex, kinship) enriching our understanding of the diversity of funerary practices of the Iron Age in Western Europe. The concentrated discovery of these burials in El Palomar, particularly in Room 24, emphasises the need for further research to explore the reasons behind such specific funerary selections and their broader social implications.

Interdisciplinary methodological proposal for the study of the funerary treatment of the early childhood of the Catalan nobility of the 14th century, buried in the Monastery of Santes Creus (Aiguamúrcia, Alt Camp, Catalonia,Spain)

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Within the framework of the restoration project of the Main Cloister of the Royal Monastery of Santes Creus (Aiguamúrcia, Alt Camp), the historical and archaeological research work has so far consisted of the archaeoanthropological excavation and overall study of nine stone sarcophagi containing the burials of 14th-Century-Catalan nobility.

In sarcophagus N6-S, the remains of two adult skeletons and a small coffin with the remains of an infant were found. The good preservation of both the human remains and the cloth-lined wooden coffin is an exceptional find. This has allowed us to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to their recovery, transfer, documentation and study.

The excavation and documentation in situ were carried out following the guidelines of archaeothanatology. Given its fragility, removing the coffin from inside the sarcophagus posed a challenge for the preventive conservation team. A custom receptacle was built for its safety during transportation and handling. X-rays and computed tomography and an extensive photographic record (digital and ultraviolet photography) were performed.

Likewise, microbiological samples were taken from the inside and outside of the coffin and the infant, in parallel with the exhaustive observation with the binocular magnifier. The wood of the coffin has been analysed and has been the subject of conservation treatments, as well as its textile elements. The anthropological study of the bone and mummified remains of the infant will be completed with the forensic study of possible pathologies, as well as with the extraction of samples for palaeogenetic and stable isotope analysis.

Adolescent Bullying in Western History

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Bullying can be defined as harmful, goal-direct aggression that occurs in the context of a power imbalance (whereby the victim has difficulty defending themselves). Modern adolescent bullying is ubiquitous and it exacts an awful toll on the mental and physical health of millions of adolescents every year. To account for its ubiquity, researchers have argued that bullying perpetration is, at least in part, an evolved adaptation that offers adaptive benefits for its users. These include social dominance/power, access to non-social resources, and reproductive opportunities. The costs include being less liked and trusted. But did these same costs and benefits exist in past historical environments in which humans evolved? More broadly, do we see bullying in past historical environments? Building on research by Brockliss and others, I will examine these questions using two kinds of historical data. Given that measures of bullying didn't exist until recently, I will rely on individual anecdotal accounts as well as broader analyses of social contexts that are consistent with bullying in modern times (e.g., competitive environments with high levels of inequality). I will focus my research on historical data from Ancient Greece and Rome, Dark Ages, Medieval and Renaissance Europe (i.e., roughly 2000 years from 800 BCE to 1800 CE). As with many aspects of child history that are relatively poorly documented compared to adult male history, there is relatively little direct anecdotal evidence for bullying in historical sources. That said, a broader social analyses of ancient societies reveals that many of the social and environmental conditions that are associated with bullying in modernity existed even more strongly in historical contexts. Further, evidence suggests that adult bullying was strongly associated with the same benefits as witnessed in modern adolescent bullying, allowing us to make informed inferences about the prevalence and functions of historical adolescent bullying. Identification and evolution of rickets and scurvy therapeutics between the 17th and 19th centuries CE: archaeo- and palaeopharmacological approach

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In France, the industrialisation period has seen a number of economic and social transitions. The epidemiological transition experienced during this time led to the emergence of diseases linked to this specific context (e.g. respiratory and cardiovascular diseases) and modifications in the prevalence of deficiency diseases such as rickets (vitamin D) and scurvy (vitamin C). However, it was also a period of major scientific progresses, particularly in medicine and pharmacy. As a result, treatments for deficiency diseases have changed.

An exhaustive review of these treatments in the medico-historical literature (medical treatises and theses, ancient pharmacopoeia, archives) has enabled us to identify both plant-based (including for example rhubarb, opium, cinchona) and animal-based treatments (e.g. after 1850, cod liver oil, the only effective treatment against rickets) or treatments containing metal elements, particularly mercury. The latter is now recognised as extremely toxic, but has been widely used in many forms for medical purposes since the 17th century. We present here the results obtained on the individual SP5 from the Rue Thubeuf cemetery (Rouen, late 18-19th centuries, France), a 3-4-year-old child showing signs of multiple bone deficiencies, probably rickets and scurvy. Bone and tooth samples from SP5 have been analysed through a palaeopharmacological approach, using an archaeometric strategy in three stages to: 1- detect mercury (X-ray fluorescence), 2- quantify it (CV-AAS) and 3- localise it in the mineral matrix (LIBS).

The ED-XRF spectrum of the bone sample revealed a mercury peak, absent in the dental sample and the CV-AAS analysis showed a high concentration of mercury in the bone (9.373 mg/kg \pm 10% uncertainty).

This preliminary archaeometric study revealed an abnormal concentration of mercury, suggesting a potential severe ante mortem intoxication. The potential sources of contamination have been discussed and ruled out, reinforcing the hypothesis of mercurial treatment.

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