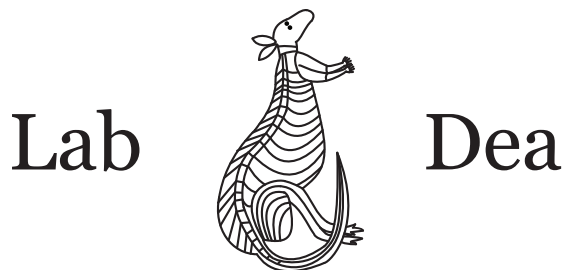




Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici

Laboratorio demo-etno-antropologico



Lunedì, 29 aprile ore 14.30-16.30

MARTA SCAGLIONI

(Università Ca' Foscari Venezia),

terrà una conferenza su:

Whence the gaze? Negotiating race within life-sciences: the case of a Tunisian microbiome research project.

Abstract

In spite of its deconstruction as a valid biological category, both by social sciences (Silva 2007; Wade 2015) and by genetic research (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, and Piazza 1994), race is still operational in clinical analysis, as it is used, for example, to predict disease susceptibility. However, its uncaredful application may encourage forms of biological essentialization and typological thinking (Meloni et al. 2022), as well as reproduce disturbingly racist narratives and practices, ignoring social and environmental contributors to diseases (Brody and Hunt 2006). As I argue in this presentation, the usage of racial categories in life-sciences is particularly problematic when science is enacted in the Global South, both because of uninformed conceptualizations of racialized populations and lifestyles, and because race is mostly conceived of as the product of a specific geo-political context, that is Western – mainly US-based – world. I draw from an ethnographic study of a microbiome research project in Tunisia, addressing the ambivalence embedded in the racial categories at use, delineating how they consist in the imposition of Western racial “commonplaces” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999). I conclude outlining how problematising racial constructions within microbiome research, and clinical sciences at large, in non-Western worlds may help give scientists the opportunity to avoid methodological pitfalls and theoretical biases, rendering a more correct and more equitable science.

Nota biografica

Marta Scaglioni is PostDoc Fellow at Cà Foscari University of Venice. She is currently employed under the ERC project HealthXCross (<https://pric.unive.it/projects/healthxcross/home>), which aims to inquire how the microbiome is reconfiguring the health of people and environments. She is currently carrying out research on the emergence of microbiome science in Tunisia and on how it mobilizes international fundings and on its knowledge productions schemes. Part of her research aims to understand how microbiome research relies on racial categories

Partecipazione libera - Seminario valido per il tirocinio DEA/ACEL. Coordinatrice: Franca Tamisari: tamisari@unive.it

and how it fosters or contrast racism. She holds a PhD in Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth/University of Milan-Bicocca, where she inquired ethnic minorities, racial issues, and racism in Tunisia.

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