Lifestyle and population dynamics in the Paleolithic

Judith Beier

postdoc at the DFG Center for Advanced Studies
"Words, Bones, Genes, Tools"
University of Tübingen

Cranial trauma in the Paleolithic: on case studies, comparative approaches, and the "highly traumatized Neanderthal"

Hannes Rathmann

Postdoc/curator of the osteological collection
Senckenberg Centre for Human Evolution and
Palaeoenvironment
University of Tübingen

Utilizing dental morphology to reconstruct Upper Paleolithic population dynamics

**Giovedì 5 settembre ore 12.00
Aula 1 Palazzo Nonfinito,
Via del Proconsolo 12, Firenze**

Judith Beier
Cranial trauma in the Paleolithic: on case studies, comparative approaches, and the "highly traumatized Neanderthal"

Traumatic injuries in human skeletal remains bear witness to accidents, risky activities, or conflicts, providing crucial insights into past human lifestyles and behavior. This talk will review past and current understandings of trauma in Neanderthals and highlight the challenges of identifying traumatic lesions and estimating trauma prevalence in incomplete skeletal remains, such as those from the fossil record. Findings from my research on cranial trauma in Neanderthals and Upper Paleolithic humans challenge the assumption of exceptionally high trauma rates in Neanderthals and reveal age-related differences in trauma rates that suggest possible differences in the social organization of the two taxa. Finally, I will outline my future research agenda, which aims to advance trauma identification in fossil remains using paleohistological techniques drawn from forensic anthropology.

Hannes Rathmann

Utilizing dental morphology to reconstruct Upper Paleolithic population dynamics

Human teeth are an invaluable data source due to their exceptional preservation in the archaeological and fossil record, even when associated skeletal remains are poorly preserved. Additionally, dental morphology is considered to be highly heritable and selectively neutral, making teeth an excellent proxy for neutral genetic markers when genetic information is unavailable. In this talk, I will highlight the utility of dental morphology for reconstructing human population history. I will conclude by presenting a recent research project that leverages dental morphology to infer Upper Paleolithic demographic scenarios with the help of a newly developed methodological tool called Pheno-ABC.