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### EDITORIAL //

Dear FASE members and colleagues,

As 2017 waives goodbye, our Winter Newsletter is here. We are looking back at the big FASE event – the Advanced Course and Symposium “Anthropology and Migration”, which took place in September in Milan. Professor Cattaneo and her team were delighted to host more than 120 participants and lecturers from 20 countries. It seems that FASE events are gaining popularity and reaching more and more students and practitioners interested in forensic anthropology.

That the FASE “fan base” is growing is also reflected in the numbers of our Facebook page followers, with almost 1600 followers counted at the end of this year. We have big plans for our FASE website, which will get a make-over

to become a modern and easy-to-navigate information source. Among others, the “renovated” website will give you the opportunity to explore an interactive world map of modern identified collections of human remains.

After reminiscing on our past events, we have an invitation for you for our next Basic Course, which will be held in September 2018 in Marseille. And there may be other meetings, such as the IALM meeting in June 2018 in Fukuoka (Japan) and the EAFS meeting in August 2018 in Lyon, where FASE will be present. So hopefully see you next year!

We wish you Happy Holidays and an exciting 2018!

Your Editorial team



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Next year holds plenty more: guidelines, manuals, news about collections and research to mention only a few

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This year has brought FASE an incredible amount of thoughts, proposals and hard facts: conferences, certification, workshops as well as an intense activity with the international anthropological community in order to be able to share through our website and Facebook what is happening and where.

topics.

But more of that in the next year. For now Happy Holidays to all. May you all be able to rest and celebrate the past and incoming year as you wish: among your loved ones, with family, or in silent meditation.

From a very chilly but Christmasy Milano

Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo!

*Cristina Cattaneo*

## FASE EVENTS

### FASE Advanced Course and Symposium “Anthropology and Migration” //

The FASE Advanced Course was booked to capacity with 60 participants. Twenty-five local and international guest speakers gave a well-rounded view on the role of forensic anthropology and forensic medicine within the context of the international migration crisis. Lecturers from as far as South Africa and the USA, but also from France, Portugal and Germany gave presentations on various aspects of the migration issue, including legal frameworks, matters of personal identification, and assessment of age and torture in asylum seekers. The first day was dedicated to topics regarding the identification of the dead, while the second day was reserved for age estimation and torture assessment in the living. The major part of the practical exercises simulated real-life scenarios related to migration fatalities, including postmortem data collection and matching the findings with fictional antemortem data. More frontally oriented practical sessions were also provided for age assessment in the living, particularly with reference to unaccompanied minors.

The FASE Symposium was attended by 81 participants, who came from 17 different countries. The most represented countries were Italy, Portugal and France, but there were also presentations and posters given by participants from Algeria, Brazil, Spain, Romania, and Greece.

The abstracts of the oral and poster



Participants during the theoretical (above) and practical sessions (below) of the FASE Advanced Course

presentations have been published in La Revue de Médecine Légale (Vol 8 - N° 4 - décembre 2017 P. 180-192) <http://www.em-consulte.com/revue/MEDLEG/8/4/table-des-matieres/>

Judging from the written reports (see below) and also from verbal words of praise from many participants, the event was a great success, mainly because of the excellent organization by Professor Cattaneo and her team, Pasquale Poppa, Danilo de Angelis Emanuela Maderna, Mirko Mattia, Cristina Stanilla Lucheschi, Debora Mazzarelli, Lara Olivieri, Annalisa Cappella, Lucie Biehler-Gomez, just to name a few.

We were delighted to have attendants from some "new" countries, including Romania, Hungary and even Australia and South Africa. We hope that this trend will continue and FASE will bring together students and practitioners of forensic anthropology and related disciplines from a variety of European (and also non-European) countries in the effort to fulfil its goals, including promoting of research and improve the practice of forensic anthropology, facilitating collaboration, and encouraging adherence to high standards of ethics, conduct and professional practice in forensic anthropology.

Following the tradition from previous years, FASE decided to reward outstanding oral and poster presentation, one each. The standard of the presentations was generally very high but at last the awards went to David Navega (Portugal) for his oral presentation "Lost in the woods: The value of tree ensemble modelling for adult age-at-death estimation from skeletal degeneration" and to Melanie Henriques for her poster "Injury reconstruction using multi-criteria approach : a preliminary study".



Teamwork and discussions during the practical session of the Advanced Course



Prof Eugenia Cunha with the two awarded students for the best poster (Melanie Henriques, on the left) and best oral presentation (David Navega, on the right).

## South Africans at the Forensic Anthropology Society of Europe Advanced Course and Symposium



From left to right: Prof Maryna Steyn (University of the Witwatersrand), Dr Desiré Brits (University of the Witwatersrand) and Mrs Mandi Alblas (Stellenbosch University) at the FASE course and symposium.

The Forensic Anthropology Society of Europe (FASE) hosted their bi-annual Advanced Course and Symposium in Milan during September. The course and symposium was attended by four South African delegates including Prof Maryna Steyn and Dr Desiré Brits from the University of the Witwatersrand, Mrs Mandi Alblas from Stellenbosch University and Dr Andre Uys from the University of Pretoria. Prof Steyn was invited as one of the keynote speakers and presented a paper entitled "Migrants, bodies and identification in South Africa". Dr Brits, Mrs Alblas and Dr Uys also presented papers at the symposium entitled, "Dismemberment in South Africa: case studies", "Nasal morphology assessment of the three predominant South Africa ancestral groups" and "Third molar development in South Africans and the probability of being 18 years of age", respectively.

The advanced course and symposium, entitled "Anthropology and Migration", highlighted the protocols and methods used to aid in the identification of deceased migrants and refugees. This was of particular value to the South African delegates as a large number of unidentified individuals, suspected to be illegal immigrants, are annually buried in South Africa as paupers. Age estimation in living individuals was also discussed, predominantly around the age of 18 years.

The FASE course and symposium hosted a number of renowned forensic anthropologists from around the globe and offered invaluable networking and collaboration

opportunities. The advanced course also provided a great opportunity to get hands on experience in forensic anthropological methodology and subsequent discussions also highlighted how ante-mortem, peri-mortem and post-mortem data could contribute to the possible positive identification of unknown individuals.

## FASE Anthropology and Migration - insights from a participant

by Codrin Rebeleanu  
Senior lecturer,

University of Medicine and Farmacy "Iuliu Hatieganu" Cluj Napoca, Romania

The event that FASE organised in September in Milan was a complex one, composed of two days of Advanced Course of anthropology and one-day Symposium. The interest in the topic of "Anthropology and Migration" was reflected in the crowded sessions, and I was happy to notice the massive presence of young forensic students and specialists from all over Europe.

In the first day of the course, the title was "Identification of Deceased Migrants on Three Continents". There were presented some great lectures held by esteemed speakers. I would like to highlight the works: "Overview of identification methods and protocols", by Prof. Douglas Ubelaker, "Where

are the dead? Identifying migrants along the South Texas border" by Prof. Kate Spradley, and "Migrants, bodies and identification in South Africa" by Prof Maryna Steyn.

In my opinion, the presentation "Identification of deceased migrants in Europe: The Italian model" by Prefetto Vittorio Piscitelli and Cristina Cattaneo was particularly interesting because it was based on an astonishing research coordinated by Prof. Cristina Cataneo which has emerged as a consequence of a 2015 migrant shipwreck.

At the end of the day I participated in a practical session which involved human remains that simulated real cases.

The workshop was professionally held, the mentors were very dedicated and happy to answer any questions, and all the participants were involved in the practical activity.

The main title of the second day was "Torture Assessment and Age Estimation in Migrants". The day started with a follow-up from the first day. This part was based on ante-mortem data collection and matching and identification which correlated with the subject of the previous day: post-mortem data collection.

I think a lot of presentations were interesting, but I was truly impressed by some of them: "Victims of Torture: a French and European Perspective" by Prof. Eric Baccino and "The role of legal medicine in aging unaccompanied minors" by Prof. Laurent Martrille. "The Istanbul Protocol: how to examine the victims of torture" by Prof. Duarte Nuno Vieira was a presentation which also offered a lot of useful information. The day was concluded with workshops focused on cases of torture and age estimation.

The one-day Symposium involved oral presentations conducted by well-known chairmen who do not need any further presentation: Eric Baccino, Cristina Cattaneo, Eugenia Cunha, Ann Ross, Philippe Lefèvre, who also presented research in the area of human identification. Furthermore, the position statement by the Board of the Forensic Anthropology Society of Europe (FASE) with the title "Strengthening the role of forensic anthropology in disaster identification" was presented. The presentation had a particular focus on migration deaths.

I would also like to mention some other interesting presentations: Elena Kranioti et al -"Postmortem CT in the investigation of decomposed human remains: advantages and limitations", Maria Teresa Ferreira et al -"A reflection on the maintenance of identified skeletal collections state of preservation" and of Marco Cummaundo et al -"Histomorphometric analysis of bone lacunae in human and pig: can it be useful for species discrimination?".

I had the honour to present a study that evaluated the current condition of the forensic anthropology in Romania with the title "Forensic anthropology in Romania – a systemic neglected problem?".

During the last day of the event the hall of the Institute



Prof Cristina Cattaneo and Prof Douglas Ubelaker listening to one of the presented lectures

of Legal Medicine hosted a great exhibition with poster presentations.

In conclusion, the Course was very instructive. I found the practical sessions really useful and also interesting. Moreover, the team-work was stimulating and my only regret is that we did not have one more day during which we could have analysed all the cases which were provided by the organisers.

The one-day Symposium offered us a glance into the areas of interests of other participants in the field of forensic anthropology and medicine, including presentations of the latest research in these areas.

I think that the event was impeccable organised and it deserves all our appreciation.

## FASE Certification in Milan //

by Eugénia Cunha

Seven candidates (out of the ten shortlisted from eight different countries) attended the FASE certification exams this year, which took place after the Advanced Course and Symposium in Milan.

The passing score for both written and practical exams is 80%. And we are glad to announce that four of the candidates passed both parts of the exam and have thus been certified. The three remaining candidates passed at least one part of the exam. This is a very positive result since it shows an increasing level of the applicants notwithstanding the high passing threshold. After some refinements, the FASE certification system is now on the right way to become one of the well-recognized certification systems of the ever growing discipline of forensic anthropology.

The successful candidates, now certified by FASE (Level 2), are Lorant Magyar (Hungary), Patricia Prado (Brazil), Maria Teresa Ferreira (Portugal), and Calil Makhoul (Lebanon /Brazil).

We look forward to receive applications for the next round of the certification exams, which will be announced early next year. The next certification exam will take place in September 2018 in Marseille (France).

## FASE FACEBOOK NUMBERS AND NEW WEBPAGE //

### FASE Facebook page

FASE Facebook page currently has almost 1600 followers. The page gained over 1000 new followers since January 2017. Almost three-quarters of our followers are females, of whom 60% are aged between 18 and 34 years, so likely students and early career professionals. The majority of the "fans" of the FASE Facebook page come from the USA, Italy, UK, Portugal, Spain, Mexico, France, Brazil and India. Each post is seen on average by 2200 people; some reaching up to 6000 people. The most popular posts are job offers.

### FASE website [forensicanthropology.eu](http://forensicanthropology.eu)

We are happy to announce that our FASE website will get a "make-over" in the first quarter of 2018. Easy navigation, better orientation and of course more relevant information for our members and followers are our goal. One of the new features will include an interactive map of modern identified collections of human remains from around the world.

# FASE BASIC COURSE

## in FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY

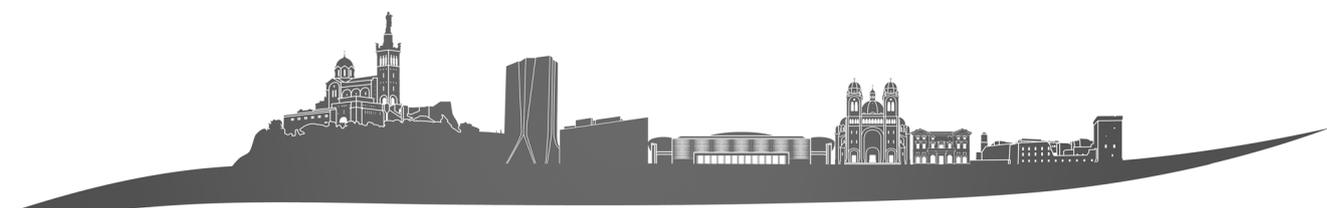
Marseilles, September 17-21, 2018

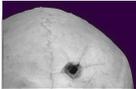
The next basic course in Forensic Anthropology  
will be held next year in Marseilles, France

# FASE One Day SYMPOSIUM

## in FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Marseilles, September 22, 2018





# FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS

## What's up with age at death? Are there any steps forward?//

by Eugenia Cunha

During the 2nd International Congress of Anthropological Sciences (ICAS) on December 8th 2017 at Musée de l'Homme in Paris, E.Cunha organized a session about age at death called "What's up with age at death? Are there any steps forward?" Five experts gave their perspectives in 30-minutes presentations.

The session started with Pascal Adalian from Aix-Marseille, who talked about age estimation of young individuals in forensic contexts: appraisal and perspectives. He was followed by Laurent Martrille from the Institute of Legal Medicine in Nancy presenting the state-of-art of ageing the adults in anthropology. Benoit Bertrand from the Institute of Legal Medicine in Lille gave an update on cementochronology: too precise to be true or too precise to be accurate. Tania Delabarde presented practical cases from Paris with a focus on

age at death "Identification of bodies without identities in the Forensic Institute in Paris: contribution of age assessment methodologies". And finally, Eugénia Cunha from the University of Coimbra and INMLCF IP discussed how the combination of a genetic, anthropological and statistical approach may be the way forward for age at death estimation of adults.

Although not large in numbers, this session has not only highlighted the problems of ageing in forensic anthropology



Lecturers at the 2nd International Congress of Anthropological Sciences (from left to right: Laurent Martrille, Tania Delabarde, Pascal Adalian, Eugénia Cunha, Benoit Bertrand)

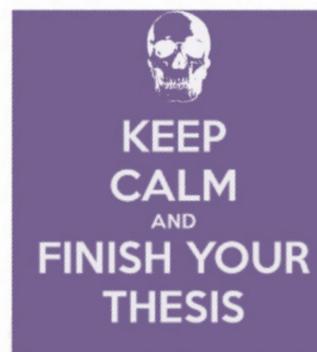
but has proposed some solutions to overcome some of the barriers that have been precluding more accurate age estimates so far. In general, this type of sessions is useful since it facilitates problem solutions through updates in a particular field of expertise. Besides, research-driven discussions attract students to the field.

## FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY THESIS

Here we present a thesis in anthropology with special emphasis in forensic taphonomy disputed in 2016. The author of the thesis is Dominika Nociarová.

Dominika Nociarová obtained her PhD in Anthropology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in 2016. Her PhD thesis is entitled "Taphonomic and

Anthropological Analysis of Unclaimed Human Remains from a Cemetery Context in Barcelona". Dominika obtained also C-F.A.S.E. Level II in 2015. She is an independent consultant in Physical and Forensic Anthropology and collaborates with the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and with a private laboratory in Barcelona. Recently, she is started collaborating with Cemeteries de Barcelona, SA, and works on the recovery, analysis and identification of human remains after the collapse of a block of niches in one of the cemeteries in Barcelona.



## TAPHONOMICA AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF UNCLAIMED HUMAN REMAINS FROM A CEMETERY CONTEXT IN BARCELONA

**Dominika Nociarova, PhD**

dominika.nociarova@gmail.com

Unclaimed human remains from Cemetery of Terrassa, Cemetery of Montjuïc and Cemetery of Collserola were analysed, with a mean postmortem interval of 22.63 years. The sample contains 301 exhumed corpses of both sexes, predominantly adults. Description of observed cadaveric states was performed separately for each cemetery as well as for all three cemeteries together. Taphonomic, anthropological and depositional information was gathered in the exhumation record. Meteorological data were observed from three different automatized weather stations close to the cemeteries, and recorded in the post-exhumation record. Postmortem interval was calculated from the day of death until the date of exhumation.

The aim of this work, was to evaluate the influence of different taphonomical agents on the final cadaveric state observed during exhumations in cemetery context

Five cadaveric states were established: total skeletonization, skeletonization with wet putrid matter, skeletonization with dry putrid matter and partial desiccation, mummification, saponification with wet putrid matter. The dry cadaveric state was in general predominant. The anterior parts of the corpses were more complete than the posterior parts. Intrinsic factors (sex, age, cause of death) did not show any effect on the cadaveric state, but extrinsic factors did. Plastic body bags, funerary sheets, and an increase of the height of the niches facilitated the conservation in form of wet cadaveric state. Vestments and diapers delayed the destruction of soft tissue. Autopsied corpses did not present a clear prevalence of any cadaveric state. Regarding PMI, totally skeletonized corpses presented the longest time since date of inhumation. No influence of the season when the individual died or of the presence of insect activity was confirmed. However, the influence of meteorological variables was statistically demonstrated, for instance, on the saponified corpses with wet putrid

matter. Artifacts linked to cemetery context were described and classified into two groups: those highly indicative, and those suggestive of the cemetery origin of the remains. A new method of evaluation of joint disassociation pattern was elaborated. Joint structure was described as articulated, disarticulated or displaced based on minimum unidirectional movements to reconstruct environmental characteristics of decomposition, including human intervention. It is a useful tool to describe the funerary ritual in the case of ancient remains and the circumstances surrounding the death in forensic context.

The locality of each cemetery displayed unique environmental conditions that affect the observed cadaveric state. Differences among cemeteries were found, which highlights the importance of climatic differences even in similar contexts. Total skeletonization generally showed the longest PMI when all cemeteries were analysed together. An effect of external factors related to funerary practice (burial place, type of wrapping, type of clothes), human manipulation (autopsy), and meteorological variables on the cadaveric state was confirmed, being those related with human intervention the most influential on advanced decomposition. Cemetery artifacts showed to be useful when the origin of human remains has to be identified. In the case of skeletons, and/or partially skeletonized remains, the pattern of joint disassociation was described to help reconstruct the mortuary practice of the remains and a new unbiased method based on minimum unidirectional movements was elaborated. The use of human remains from cemetery context stands out as an important model to analyse human decomposition and understand the evolution of corpses in advanced state of decomposition.

Have you recently finished your doctoral thesis on a topic related to forensic anthropology? We would like to include the summary/abstract or just the title and affiliation of your thesis on our webpage and in the Newsletter. We look forward to your email at: [fase.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:fase.newsletter@gmail.com)



# CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

## MEETINGS/ CONFERENCES 2018

- February** **19-24.02.**  
70th AAFS Anniversary Meeting  
*Seattle, USA*  
<https://www.aafs.org/>
- April** **09.-11.04.**  
45th Paleopathology Association (PPA) North American Meeting with  
Paleoanthropology Society Annual Meeting  
*Austin (Texas, USA)*  
<https://paleopathology-association.wildapricot.org/event-2735912>
- 11.-12.04.**  
43rd Human Biology Association (HBA) Annual Meeting  
*Austin (Texas, USA)*  
<https://www.humbio.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/HBA-Call-2018.pdf>
- 11.-14.04.**  
American Association of Physical Anthropology (AAPA) Annual Meeting  
*Austin (Texas, USA)*  
<http://physanth.org/annual-meetings/annual-meeting-2018/>
- May** **23-25.05.**  
10th Annual Meeting of the Anthropology and Funeral Archaeology Group  
*Bordeaux (France)*  
[https://naturalsciences.ch/uuid/4046d5d1-185b-5592-be28-96eb3e4ee016?r=20170706115333\\_1500367425\\_ca84afd1-fc08-5881-8472-bd7e97b6e3bd](https://naturalsciences.ch/uuid/4046d5d1-185b-5592-be28-96eb3e4ee016?r=20170706115333_1500367425_ca84afd1-fc08-5881-8472-bd7e97b6e3bd)
- June** **04.-08.06.**  
24th Congress of the International Academy of Legal Medicine with the 102nd Congress of Japanese Society of Legal Medicine  
*Fukuoka (Japan)*  
<http://www.ialm2018.org/>
- August** **22-25.08.**  
21st European Anthropological Association (EAA) Congress  
*Odense, Denmark*
- 27-31.08.**  
8th European Academy of Forensic Science Conference  
*Lyon, France, <http://www.eafs2018.eu/>*

## WORKSHOPS 2018

- March** **19-23.03.**  
15th Virtopsy Course  
*Zürich, Switzerland*  
<http://virtopsy.com/>
- May** **18-19.05.**  
6th International Workshop in Clinical Forensic Medicine  
"Domestic Violence"  
*Montpellier, France*  
Dept. of Forensic Medicine, Univ. Montpellier
- September** **17-22.09.**  
FASE Basic Course and Symposium  
*Marseille, France*  
<http://www.forensicanthropology.eu/index.php>

EVERY YEAR DIFFERENT FORENSIC CENTERS ARE ORGANIZING A NUMBER OF SHORT COURSES (BASIC AND ADVANCED) IN FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY DEDICATED TO FORENSIC FACIAL RECONSTRUCTION, FIELD RECOVERY METHODS, STATISTICAL METHODS, TRAUMA ANALYSIS, BIOLOGICAL IDENTITY... HERE IS THE LIST OF THEIR WEBPAGES WHERE YOU CAN FIND DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE EXACT TOPICS, DATES AND PRICES:

**University of Tennessee (Forensic Anthropology Centre)**  
*Knoxville, TN, USA*  
<http://fac.utk.edu/courses.html>

**Mercyhurst University (Archaeological Institute)**  
*Erie, PA, USA*  
<http://mai.mercyhurst.edu/applied-forensic-sciences/forensic-anthropology-summer-short-courses>

**Texas State University**  
*San Marcos, TX, USA*  
<http://www.txstate.edu/anthropology/facts/workshops.html>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON FORTHCOMING FORENSIC CONGRESSES NOT YET ANNOUNCED CAN BE FOUND:

- <http://webdata.aafs.org/public/meetings/listings.aspx>
- <http://www.ascd.org/forensic-conferences/>
- [http://www.forensicswiki.org/wiki/Upcoming\\_events](http://www.forensicswiki.org/wiki/Upcoming_events)
- <http://asfo.org/courses-and-meetings/>

September

**28.08.-01.09.**

22nd European Meeting of the  
Paleopathology Association  
*Zagreb, Croatia*  
<http://ppa2018.com/>

**09.-13.09.**

24th International Symposium on the  
Forensic Sciences  
ANZFSS 2018  
-Forensic Science Without Borders-  
*Perth (Australia)*  
<http://anzfss.org/>

The next issue of the Newsletter is planned for **spring 2018**.

We would appreciate if you could send us your comments, suggestions and contributions (comments on events; book reviews; discussions; interesting case studies etc.) by **April 2018**.

We also invite organizers to email us an invitation to relevant **events** that can be included in the next issue

[\(fase.newsletter@gmail.com\)](mailto:fase.newsletter@gmail.com)



## Not a member? Join Us!

To become a member of FASE you can apply for membership at IALM, International Association of Legal Medicine. As a IALM member you have the option of becoming member of FASE that does not carry any additional fee and it allows you to receive various extra information on forensic anthropology in Europe.



<http://www.ialm.info/>

<http://www.ialm.info/>

[lassociazione.html](http://www.ialm.info/lassociazione.html)