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Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- I. Eighteenth century onset -- 1. Darker skin and brain -- 2. Qualitative and quantitative differences -- 3. Speculations and objections -- II. Rising tide -- 1. The "phrenological wedge" -- 2. Shrunken brains -- 3. Materialism and the Recapitulation theory -- 4. Weighing empty, filled spaces -- 5. The will to differentiate -- 6. Early doubts -- III. Climax -- 1. Uncertain certainty: Paris on stage -- 2. An intense decade -- 3. An urgent desideratum for science -- 4. Antinomies and Paradoxes -- 5. Orphans of Broca -- 6. A literature by itself -- IV. Twentieth century epilogue -- 1. Resilience despite everything -- 2. Further views in conflict -- 3. Innovating techniques, popular science, and deconstructing myths -- Summary -- Bibliography -- Index of names.
Sommario/riassunto	Since the second half of the eighteenth century, generations of scientists persisted in studying the relationships between the volume, weight or shape of the human brain and the degree of 'intelligence'. In Pogliano's book, the thread of time drives the narrative up to the mid-twentieth century. It investigates the duration and changes of a game that was intrinsically political, although having to do with bones and nervous matter. Races made its main object, during a long period when Western culture believed the human species to be naturally partitioned into a number of discrete types, with their innate and hereditary traits.

Never leading to irrefutable achievements, the polycentric (as well as visual) enterprise herein described is full of growing tensions, doubts, and disillusionment.

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