



«ETTORE MAJORANA» FOUNDATION AND CENTRE FOR SCIENTIFIC CULTURE  
TO PAY A PERMANENT TRIBUTE TO ARCHIMEDES AND GALILEO GALILEI, FOUNDERS OF MODERN SCIENCE  
AND TO ENRICO FERMI, THE "ITALIAN NAVIGATOR", FATHER OF THE WEAK FORCES



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ETHOLOGY «DANILO MAINARDI»

41<sup>st</sup> Course: *EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF RITUALS,  
BELIEFS AND RELIGIOUS MINDS*

ERICE-SICILY: 9 – 14 MAY 2018

Sponsored by the: • Italian Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research • Sicilian Regional Government

## OPENING CEREMONY AND INTRODUCTION

- S. PARMIGIANI, University of Parma, Parma, IT
- J. HENRICH, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US
- A. NORENZAYAN, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, CA
- E. SLINGERLAND, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, CA

## WHAT IS RELIGION

- The attractions of religions: Religious gadgets and mental disorders*
- R. McCauley, Center for Mind, Brain and Culture, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, US
- The evolution of what? Shifting the focus from religions to worldviews and ways of life*
- A. TAVES, University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA, US

- What kinds of religious activity occurred in ancestral environments?*
- P. BOYER, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO, US

## HISTORICAL AND ARCHIVAL APPROACHES

- The cultural evolution of religion: Testing time*
- R. GRAY, Max Planck Institute, Jena, DE
- Durkheim with Data: The database of religious history*
- E. SLINGERLAND, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, CA

- Acts of God? Religiosity and natural disasters across subnational world districts*
- J. SINDING BENTZEN, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, DK

## RELIGION, COOPERATION AND CONFLICT

- The spiritual dimension of human conflict*
- ATRAN, Centre for the Resolution of Institute Conflict, Oxford University, Oxford, UK
- Gods of War: Religion as an adaptation for inter-group conflict*
- D. JOHNSON, Oxford University, Oxford, UK

## Simulating religions as complex adaptive systems

- R. SOSIS, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, US

## The cultural evolution of prosocial religions

- J. HENRICH, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US

## RITUAL I

- The role of ecstatic rituals in the evolution of religion*
- H. LENFESTY, Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ, US
- The puzzle of extreme rituals: What we are learning, and what we still need to know*
- D. XYGALATAS, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, US

- Do as I do, not as I say: Content and context biases in transmission of religious beliefs*
- A. WILLARD, Oxford University, Oxford, UK

## RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

- Imagine there's a heaven: The role of imagination in niche construction*
- C. SHANTZ, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, ON, CA

## Stable feed-back loops: Religious belief and practice in cultural immunology

- J. SØRENSEN, Aarhus University, Aarhus, DK

## Religion and the evolution of second-nature

- J. BULBULIA, University of Auckland, Auckland, NZ

## Is a fully naturalistic religion possible?

- D.S. WILSON, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY, US

## RITUAL II

- The evolution and ontogeny of ritual*
- C. LEGARE, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, US

## The role of ritual in the evolution of social complexity

- H. WHITEHOUSE, Oxford University, Oxford, UK

## Faith in the faithful: Religious practice, reputation, and social support networks in rural south India

- E. POWER, London School of Economics & Political Sciences, London, UK

## PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

As a deep and enduring aspect of human societies and individual psychology, religion remains an evolutionary puzzle. Considering its centrality in so many lives, however, the scientific study of religion remains a largely neglected and fragmented topic. In this workshop, an international and interdisciplinary group of eminent scholars explore the current state of our knowledge concerning religion as a complex bundle of behavior-belief packages rooted in genetic and cultural evolution. The focus will be on fresh developments and current controversies about the evolution of commitments to gods, rituals, sacred values, as well as religious cooperation and conflict in the world today. The format will encourage brief talks followed by extensive discussion and debate. Speakers are asked to reflect on emerging themes across disciplinary boundaries, and formulate the new and important questions that will shape future developments of this growing field over the next decade.

## APPLICATIONS

Persons wishing to attend the Course should apply writing to:

Professor Stefano Parmigiani  
University of Parma, Parma, Italy  
E-mail: [stefano.parmigiani@unipr.it](mailto:stefano.parmigiani@unipr.it)

## PLEASE NOTE

Participants are expected to arrive in Erice on May 9, no later than 5 p.m.

More information about the other activities of the  
«ETTORE MAJORANA» FOUNDATION AND CENTRE FOR SCIENTIFIC CULTURE  
can be found on the WWW at the following address:  
<http://www.ccsem.infn.it>

## POETIC TOUCH

According to legend, Erice, son of Venus and Neptune, founded a small town on top of a mountain (750 metres above sea level) more than three thousand years ago. The founder of modern history — i.e. the recording of events in a methodic and chronological sequence as they really happened without reference to mythical causes — the great Thucydides (~500 B.C.), writing about events connected with the conquest of Troy (1183 B.C.) said: «After the fall of Troy some Trojans on their escape from the Achaei arrived in Sicily by boat and as they settled near the border with the Sicani all together they were named Elymi: their towns were Segesta and Erice.» This inspired Virgil to describe the arrival of the Trojan royal family in Erice and the burial of Anchise, by his son Enea, on the coast below Erice. Homer (~1000 B.C.), Theocritus (~300 B.C.), Polybius (~200 B.C.), Virgil (~50 B.C.), Horace (~20 B.C.), and others have celebrated this magnificent spot in Sicily in their poems. During seven centuries (XIII-XIX) the town of Erice was under the leadership of a local oligarchy, whose wisdom assured a long period of cultural development and economic prosperity which in turn gave rise to the many churches, monasteries and private palaces which you see today. In Erice you can admire the Castle of Venus, the Cyclopean Walls (~800 B.C.) and the Gothic Cathedral (~1300 A.D.). Erice is at present a mixture of ancient and medieval architecture. Other masterpieces of ancient civilization are to be found in the neighbourhood: at Motya (Phoenician), Segesta (Elymian), and Selinunte (Greek). On the Aegadian Islands — theatre of the decisive naval battle of the first Punic War (264-241 B.C.) — suggestive neolithic and paleolithic vestiges are still visible: the grottoes of Favignana, the carvings and murals of Levanzo.

Splendid beaches are to be found at San Vito Lo Capo, Scopello, and Cornino, and a wild and rocky coast around Monte Cofano: all at less than one hour's drive from Erice.