INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ON COMPLEXITY

3rd Course

PHYSICS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PHENOMENA

ERICE-SICILY: 17 - 24 SEPTEMBER 2006

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

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PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The centenary of the birth of Ettore Majorana offers an occasion to celebrate also one of the first physicists who suggested to apply the methods of statistical physics to socio-economic phenomena. The purpose of this Course is to critically discuss the state of the art in the field and to identify the most promising lines of activity as well as the limitations of this approach. The massive amount of data now available in these fields poses the Crucial problem of the extraction of the relevant information. The example of thermodynamics and related concepts would be inspiring in this respect. It is parallel with this the problem of the extraction of the relevant information. The example of thermodynamics as the limitations of this approach.

APPLICATIONS

Persons wishing to attend the Course should apply by e-mail to the Director of the Course:

Professor Luciano PIETRONERO
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specifying:

i) full name(s), address, age, nationality;
ii) academic qualifications, present position and affiliation and/or a short CV;
iii) the atelier(s) they wish to attend;
iv) their specific interest in the meeting.

• PLEASE NOTE
Participants must arrive on September 17, not later than 7 pm.

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 — is the great Thucydides (~480 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 Sicamans all together they were named Elymae: 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 (~1100 B.C.), Thucydides (~480 B.C.), Polybius (~200 B.C.), Virgil (~19 B.C.), Horace (~20 B.C.), and others have celebrated this magnificent spot in Sicily in their poems. During seven centuries (XII-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.) — suggestic neolithic and palaeolithic vestiges are still visible: the grottoes of Favignano, the carvings and murals of Levanzo. Splendid beaches are to be found at San Vito Lo Capo, Scopello, and Corinto, and a wild and rocky coast around Monte Cofano: all at less than one hour’s drive from Erice.

More information about the «Ettore Majorana» Foundation and Centre for Scientific Culture can be found on the WWW at the following address: www.ccesm.infn.it