



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



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

142nd Course: BEYOND THE BIOLOGICAL LIMITS: THE CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS DISORDERS – ADVANCED MANAGEMENT AND END-OF-LIFE ISSUES IN THE NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASES

ERICE-SICILY: 3 – 6 DECEMBER 2010

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

PROGRAMME AND LECTURERS

Topics

The consciousness and its disorders

Round table: to measure and detect consciousness in human being

Aging and Neurodegenerative disorders

The Advance will and end-of-life issues

Round table: controversies and facts on the advance will and end-of-life issues

Round table: the aging population, end-of-life practices, the bioethical debate and the legislation

Main Lectures

The consciousness and the mind: an unsolved problem

Theories of consciousness

The vegetative state, the minimal conscious state and coma

The new frontiers in communicative devices: the locked-in state, disorders of consciousness and the brain-computer interface

Advances in neuroscientific approaches to the disorders of consciousness

The aging population and the neurodegenerative disorders

The palliative care at the end of life – assisted suicide, terminal sedation and euthanasia

The Advance will

The Advance will, the end-of-life issues and the forensic medicine

The Advance will, the end-of-life issues and the law

The Advance will: the current legislation in Italy and Europe

- A. ARGO, Azienda Ospedaliera-Universitaria Policlinico, Palermo, IT
- V. BONITO, Ospedali Riuniti di Bergamo, IT
- C. CAMPBELL, Saint Catherine's Hospice, Scarborough, UK
- R. CAUSARANO, Hospice L'Aquilone, Milano, IT
- C.A. DEFANTI, Bergamo, IT
- G. GIORELLO, Università di Milano, IT
- M. GRILLO, Università di Palermo, IT
- E. GOY, Portland's Veterans' Affairs Medical Center, VA, US
- S. GREENFIELD, University of Oxford, UK
- C. KOCH, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA, US
- A. KUBLER, Universität Würzburg, DE
- V. LA BELLA, Università di Palermo, IT
- I. MARINO, Senato della Repubblica, Roma, IT
- M. MELAZZINI, AISLA, Milano, IT
- F. PICCOLI, Università di Palermo, IT
- B. ROMANO, Università di Palermo, IT
- G. RUSSO, Istituto Teologico San Tommaso, Messina, IT
- G. SAVETTIERI, Università di Palermo, IT
- F. VIOLA, Università di Palermo, IT
- C. VINCENTI, Tribunale di Palermo, IT

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This Advanced Workshop will be focused on: i) the biology and neuropsychology of the consciousness and its related disorders, with special reference to the neurodegenerative disorders; the workshop will cover several issues related to the vegetative state, the locked-in state and the advanced communication devices, such as the brain-computer interface. The issues related to the end of life in patients with severe neurodegenerative disorders and with disorders of consciousness will be debated on a legal, bioethical, and medical ground. The aim of the Workshop will be to present the state-of-the-art on the consciousness, its disorders and the end-of-life issues (included the advance will) to students with different backgrounds (Medicine, Philosophy, Law, Bioethics, Psychology, etc.). Large room will be devoted to the interactive debate between lecturers and students through the afternoon round tables.

At the end of the Course, students should come up with robust and up-to-date knowledge on the most advanced topics on consciousness, its disorders and the related bioethical, medical and legal issues.

APPLICATIONS

Persons wishing to attend the Course should contact:

- Professor Federico PICCOLI
University of Palermo
Via G La Loggia, 1 – 90129 PALERMO, Italy
Tel: +39.091.6555158 – Fax: +39.091.6555162
e-mail: labella@unipa.it

They should specify:

- full name, address, age and nationality;
- qualifications and present position.

Closing date for application: October 20, 2010

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 Sicanians 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 Anchises, by his son Aeneas, 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.

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

PLEASE NOTE

Participants must arrive in Erice on December 3, not later than 4 pm.