



SEMINARIO

“Environmental Uncertainty feeds Parochialism and Conflict”



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Climate change and politico-economic instabilities can make the world an increasingly uncertain place for many. Here we identify parochialism - in-group cooperation paired to out-group hostility - as a response to environmental uncertainty and link it to costly conflict. Time-series analyses (Europe 1500 - 1900CE) show that uncertainty emanating from temporal volatility in temperature and food prices predict next-year onset of civil conflicts. Likewise, across ~1400 interstate conflicts (1816 - 2010CE worldwide) revisionist “aggressors” experienced stronger volatility in temperature and economic productivity in the decade prior to the conflict than their non-revisionist “defenders”. Experiments (462 subjects in 77 intergroup contests) and archival analyses (110 countries) show that uncertainty increases stress and parochialism, rendering groups more victorious but less wealthy. Policy enabling groups to cope constructively with uncertainty can prevent conflict.

Martedì 22 Gennaio 2019
ore 15.00 - Aula “Ezio Ponzo”
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