

A [Satellite Meeting](#) will be organised before the EHBEA annual conference (6th-8th April, Paris, France).

« Cultural Evolution by Cultural Attraction: Empirical Issues »

Time: Wednesday the 5th of April 2016 (from 9:00-17:00)

Location: Ecole Normale Supérieure (Salle Langevin)

Registration: Registration is free (send an email to nbaumard@gmail.com). Up to 50 participants can register. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Questions? Contact Nicolas Baumard (nbaumard@gmail.com)

Organisers:

Nicolas Baumard, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris

Nicolas Claidière, CNRS, Marseille

Olivier Morin, Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Jena

Thom Scott-Phillips, Central European University & Durham University

Introduction:

Cultural Attraction Theory (CAT) is a framework for the development of natural scientific explanations of culture. It is based on the idea that cultural phenomena - cooking, languages, graphic systems, religious beliefs, or legal norms - spread and stabilize to the extent that they follow "factors of attraction". These factors can take many forms - e.g., cognitive, biological, ecological, and so on. To take the case of cognitive attractors, CAT predicts that cultural phenomena that trigger evolved cognitive mechanisms such as disgust, object recognition, agent detection or the sense of fairness will be more likely to be understood, memorized and transmitted in a population. CAT has several points of contact with more mainstream approaches to cultural evolution, but also some important differences, particularly regarding the role of selection.

Moving on from theoretical discussion, this workshop will consider cultural attraction from an empirical perspective. We have gathered together eight researchers who aim, in their empirical work, at naturalistic, causal explanation of culture, and who make use of the tools and insights of CAT to different degrees (some to a large degree, others not so much). Our objective is to explore the extent to which CAT is a useful framework with which to propose and develop natural scientific explanations of culture.

Confirmed speakers:

Alberto Acerbi, Eindhoven University of Technology

Nicolas Baumard, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris

Nicolas Claidière, CNRS, Marseille

Fiona Jordan, University of Bristol

Ruth Mace, University College London

Hugo Mercier, CNRS, Lyon

Olivier Morin, Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Jena

Daniel Nettle, University of Newcastle

Benjamin Purzycki, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig

Thom Scott-Phillips, Central European University & Durham University

Dan Sperber, Central European University

More information [here](#).