

# An Interview with Marco Ripà, B.Econ.Sc.

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To Marco Ripà for the chat about giftedness and everything under the Italian sun.

Scott

# An Interview with Marco Ripà

## (Part One)

### Abstract

**An interview with Marco Ripà. He discusses: geographic, cultural, and linguistic familial background; influence on personal development; pivotal moments; loneliness and associated fear in youth, and its frequency in gifted youth; physique sculpting and personal combat training; B.Econ.Sc., *magna cum laude*; autodidactic proclivities; expertise and knowledge and its benefit for personal and professional life; contents of the big IQ projects; inspiration for mathematics competitions, papers in number theory, and the creation of integer sequences for OEIS; title, contents, and interest in the discrete mathematics book; academic papers on currency speculation, market failures, social justice, and sub-prime mortgage crisis; common intelligences with lower than expected occurrence and flourishing; a society that provides for the gifted and talented; summarization of the research subjects completed by him; entrance into the high-IQ and ultra-high-IQ world; and the inter-relationship development up to the present between the high-IQ, and ultra-high-IQ, community and himself.**

*Keywords:* gifted youth, high-IQ, IQ, Marco Ripà, mathematics, research, society, ultra-high-IQ.

- 1. In terms of geography, culture, and language, where does your family background reside?**

I was born in Rome (Italy), 31 years ago, and I still live here. My parents' IQ is average and my family belongs to the Catholic middle class (let's say, none of them talks a second language or knows how to create a P.D.F. file – sad but true), despite this I became agnostic at the age of 17 and I started to read foreigner thinkers such as Nietzsche, Voltaire, Goethe, Rousseau and so on...

**2. How did this influence personal development?**

I think that this environment has not influenced my cultural development in a positive way, even if I opened my mind and started to think deeper about myself when I discovered the World Wide Web and Google.

**3. What about influences and pivotal moments in major cross-sections of early life including kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school, and undergraduate studies (college/university)?**

Well, when I was a child I was afraid of school (I was in a kindergarten just for one year or so). The loneliness was triggering the fear but, sometimes, the fear of being rejected by others was driving the loneliness itself... I started feeling better during my high school years, practicing karate (wado-ryu style at agonistic level) and starting to lift some weights. From my very personal point of view, it could be good to change something in your lifestyle in order to make a change in the way you relate with others and to make them feel good with you, starting to listen more their words rather than just talking.

**4. You noted the fear brought on by loneliness in youth. Does this happen with frequency among the gifted?**

I think so. Obviously, it is not a general rule, but I think that it can be a very common condition, especially if you have some Asperger traits too.

**5. You mentioned weightlifting and karate, “wado-ryu style.” What does physique sculpting and personal combat training provide for you?**

I started practicing karate during my second High School year. My initial thought was that it would be helpful to gain some respect in my classroom, to avoid myself from getting bullied. Keep training, I gained many injuries and I started to realize what is the real meaning of this discipline, looking at it not just as a sport. Later I started to train myself also at the gym, hoping to become stronger and I gradually reduced my commitment in karate, looking for something more flexible to practice during my college years. At the end of the journey I can say that I have gained many injuries and a lot of respect for the sports, their practitioners and their common values.

**6. You earned a B.Econ.Sc., *magna cum laude*.<sup>1</sup> What expertise and knowledge comes with this qualification?**

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<sup>1</sup> Please see LinkedIn. (2015). Marco Ripà. Retrieved from <https://it.linkedin.com/pub/marco-rip%C3%A0/14/991/950>.

I consider myself a self-taught man with a wide range of interests (including Psychometrics, Statistics, Divergent Thinking and Mathematics) but, at the time, my thought was that a degree in Economics would have been better than a degree in Physics, so I left the “Physics and Astrophysics” course and I spent a few years studying Keynes, Friedman, Wicksell, Hayek and their ideas about the trade-off between equity and efficiency. I did not appreciate Economic theories very much, because I prefer more abstractive and rigorous subjects, so I finally left university when the sub-prime mortgage crisis reached my country.

- 7. “Psychometrics, Statistics, Divergent Thinking and Mathematics” provide a solid foundation for research into intelligence. Intelligence research observes and examines the gifted and talented. Gifted and talented individuals might tend towards autodidactic education. Your own autobiography given before describes this. As a general rule about and for the gifted and talented, do autodidactic proclivities seem true about them to you?**

I read being a self-taught person as a natural response to an inner discomfort, when you cannot find enough challenge in the school or if it cannot put you in the right perspective. I do not know if a general rule exists, but I think that any unrecognized gifted individual can easily develop many interests in the world wide web era. Speaking about talented people, it is probably true that if they can taste their passion (at least) one time, they can usually find the way to follow it.

- 8. How did this expertise and knowledge benefit personal and professional life?**

To be honest with you, I have to say that I did not use very much what I learned in the Economics field. When I left the College/University (here in Italy they are basically the same thing) I participated in a few projects within the private sector, unfortunately my colleagues did not keep their word about them... so, during the last few years, I have worked alone on some projects involving abstract conceptualization, 3D modeling, giftedness and proficiency analysis. By the way, I am currently working, as a member of two different teams, on two big projects relating to IQ.

**9. With respect to those two different teams purposed to the study of IQ in big projects, what remain the contents of those projects?**

Well, the aim of the first project is to establish a not yet existing link between the high IQ world and the job world, for an interesting exchange never realized, where very selected “brains” are offered for companies searching for special abilities: this is “BrainsJob”, indeed. The second project is the implementation of my spatial dynamic IQ tests (ENSDT): the original idea was explained in my ebook “<https://books.google.it/books?isbn=8863699461>” in 2012.

**10. You earned an honor prize in high school and second place in the high school mathematics competition around the same time. In addition to these accomplishments, you authored papers on number theory and created some integer sequences for OEIS. What inspired taking part in these for you?**

As previously mentioned, since I was a child I liked discrete mathematics very much. Thus, after the undergraduate degree I started to write a novel involving cryptography and a book about hyperoperations. This book focused on the p-adic convergence of tetration contains many integer sequences and a few of them were not listed on the OEIS, thus I decided to submit them. To date I have contributed to the OEIS with more than 40 new sequences.

I have published also a few papers on peer-reviewed journals (such as “Notes on Number Theory and Discrete Mathematics” and “Matematicamente”) relating to prime numbers and a couple of papers about the classic *Nine Dots Puzzle* extended to any k-dimensional space ( $k > 2$ ), the latest paper will be published soon on the same journal.

**11. Regarding the title of the book based on discrete mathematics and personal interest in it, what was the title of the book and its contents?**

“La strana coda della serie  $n^{n^{\dots^n}}$ ” is a book that I have published in 2011 and it is focused on hyperoperators and their p-adic convergence properties. In particular, I presented some new results about tetration (or hyper-4).

To easy understand what tetration is, you can take a look at the following relations,  
addition : multiplication = multiplication : exponentiation = exponentiation : tetration .

**12. You authored academic papers on currency speculation, market failures, social justice, and sub-prime mortgage crisis. Why these topics?**

I wrote them in Italian. The first one was relating to my essay “International organizations facing the current crisis” and then I shared my thoughts about social justice: I think that it is very important in order to reduce the gap in education due to economic factors or constraints. Some constraints of a subjective nature, ethics, morals and various prejudices may still persist: intelligence is not focused in specific areas or specific regions of the planet. This implies that, anywhere, in different social, religious, economic and environmental situation, we may find the presence of intelligences that, under the right conditions, might be able to put to use their gift. Thus, contexts in which the dynamics of social, religious, environmental but also economic and infrastructure aspects do not allow personal development, could drive us to miss the great chance to give these humans like us the opportunity to develop their talents. And this could be done with the intelligence as well with artistic talents. Moreover, social issues (religious, environmental, and so on...) can affect the development of the personality of “gifted” children and “gifted” adults.

**13. With respect to the underutilization of gifts and talents of the gifted and talented, what common intelligences seem to have lower than expected occurrence and flourishing?**

Very hard to say, and I am not a big fan of Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences. Could I argue for a quite common lack of “relational skills” or so? This would be the main key, in my opinion.

**14. What society appears to provide for the gifted and talented?**

If we assume that we live in a modern country where liberalism and *laissez-faire capitalism* belong to the mainstream, and where the idea of the self-made man (such as Jobs, Gates, and so on) is often embodied by gifted and/or talented people, we could imagine a good scenario, even if it cannot be the best of all. Gifted and talented individuals sometime need to be understood, supported and feeling themselves to be appreciated by others, unconditionally.

**15. What summarizes each of these research subjects completed by you?**

Mathematics is my first love and I need to deal with her occasionally, while the hope to support gifted children is my main goal and now I am very happy about what me and my associate, Roberto Enea, are doing in this field: we are implementing the first dynamic spatial IQ test in the world with a unique norm and immune from the risk of cheating! It would be a dream that become reality one day, to have this new generation of tests to be, administrated to measure cognitive abilities with a clinical approach.

**16. You have deep involvement in the high-IQ world. For examples, you founded the sPIqr Society, co-founded the World IQ Foundation (WIQF), constructed the *X-Test*, presented at the 12th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness in the United Arab Emirates, Dubai (2012), and hold memberships in about thirty high-IQ societies.<sup>2,3,4</sup> In addition, you have an interesting proposal for a new computer-based intelligence test**

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<sup>2</sup> Please see sPIqr Society. (2015). sPIqr Society. Retrieved from <http://www.spiqrsociety.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> Please see World IQ Foundation. (n.d.). Organizers. Retrieved from <http://wiqf.org/international-titles/organizers/>.

<sup>4</sup> Please see World Intelligence Network. (n.d.). SPIQR. Retrieved from <http://www.iqsociety.org/win/societies/spiqr/>.

**for the high-range.<sup>5</sup> How did this entrance into the high-IQ and ultra-high-IQ world begin for you?**

Good question, thanks for letting me tell this story. I discovered IQ tests in early 2009, searching for something to relax my brain after my last exam. I found the M-FACE/L test and I took it. A few months later I took the 916 test by Laurent Dubois scoring well in either cases... I put the blame on Google.

**17. How did this inter-relationship develop up to the present between the high-IQ, and ultra-high-IQ, community and yourself?**

When I discovered my giftedness I started to learn more about this topic and I sadly understood that in my country the word “gifted” is almost unknown and there is not any support in our schools (no acceleration, no curriculum compacting nor curricular enrichment). Thus, I decided to found the sPIqr Society after I joined some well-known high-IQ groups. Now I have many pen friends all over the world and I can see our society from a lot of different perspectives.

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<sup>5</sup> “High-range” defined as “at or above 3 standard deviations or 3 sigma from the norm.”

## (Part Two)

### Abstract

**An interview with Marco Ripà. He discusses: positives and negatives in the world of the high-IQ and ultra-high IQ; famous flames in the high-IQ and ultra-high IQ; personality difference among the gifted generalists and gifted specialists; creating, developing, and sustaining the sPIqr Society up to the present; total number and personality profile of the sPIqr Society membership; source of linguistic talent; accrued benefits for professional and personal life; YouTube channel; aerobic, balance, and strength health recommendations; source of aforementioned interests; Asperger's Syndrome advantages and disadvantages; utilization of advantages and adaptation of disadvantages of Asperger's Syndrome; Tim Page, Glenn Gould, friendship, companionship, and Asperger's Syndrome; audio-visual media for self-expression and its contrast with print media; most correct general philosophy; most correct ethical philosophy; most correct political philosophy; most correct social philosophy; most correct economic philosophy; and the singular philosophical framework of the most correct general, ethical, political, social, and economic philosophy in civilization.**

*Keywords:* Asperger's Syndrome, Dr. Manahel Thabet, Dubai, Glenn Gould, high-IQ, intelligence test, Marco Ripà, Tim Page, ultra-high-IQ, United Arab Emirates, X-Test, YouTube.

**18. You co-founded WIQF with Dr. Manahel Thabet. How did this collaboration develop and influence the growth of WIQF up to the present?**

The WIQF would not have been founded without Dr. Manahel Thabet. The original idea come-up in my mind a few years ago. At the time, my thought was that high IQ people should ask for a more reliable and strict ranking than the WGD. People tend to report only their top scores forgetting the rest, but this partial info would lead to inflated scores, so I reported this issue to Manahel and we finally decided to create the WIQF: she helped me with the WIQF formula, its registration, with the website and later bringing inside the group (as advisory board members) Prof. Tony Buzan and the chess Grandmaster Raymond D. Keene OBE. One year later, WIQF does not count many members, but the average level is really good.

**19. With respect to the *X-Test* and other high-range intelligence tests, how does one create, develop, refine, administer, statistically norm, and publish a legitimate test?<sup>6</sup>**

The X-Test is no longer in use since May 2013, because I analyzed the main problems related to high range tests. You can find the whole story here:

[http://www.researchgate.net/publication/251238254\\_X-Test\\_Solutions\\_Finally\\_Revealed!](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/251238254_X-Test_Solutions_Finally_Revealed!)

By the way, high range tests (even my ENSDT 20 and ENSDT Prototype) cannot be an exact science not because their norm cannot be based on thousands of testees, norms are usually based on z-score, I mean on the scores achieved by a testee on most reliable, recognized and supervised tests. It is not easy to do, but I hope to provide a useful tool to guess the ultra-high-IQ taking a Gf loaded test at home, without any time limit.

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<sup>6</sup> Please see LinkedIn. (2015). Marco Ripà. Retrieved from <https://it.linkedin.com/pub/marco-rip%C3%A0/14/991/950>.

**20. How did the opportunity arise to present in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates?**

It was Dr. Manahel Thabet to give me this opportunity and I am really grateful for having had the chance to present a couple of papers about gifted children features and their needs, plus a screening method to easily identify gifted pupils inside the school. It was a great experience and a memory that will last a lifetime.

**21. What positives and negatives exist in the world of the high-IQ and ultra-high IQ?**

In my humble opinion, the world of the high-IQ is not very different from common life. High-IQ groups are groups of different people, from different countries, religions, ideas and so on. We usually talk in English or Spanish and sometimes a flame can be hard to be resolved, especially if you are talking about an IQ related topic. The best gift I have received from high IQ people is a 360° understanding, sharing a lot of interesting ideas and projects, while on the other side of the coin I can see some lack of self-confidence and existential loneliness.

**22. Based on the response, flames in the high-IQ community remain hard to extinguish at times. However, most should self-exhaust because most societies most of the time continue to persist, even grow and adapt to internal changes. Any famous flames which continue in high-IQ and ultra-high-IQ community?**

A famous personal flame is the one against the Figure test (by N. Soulios and L. Papadioti), since I started it asking for its norm to the authors: as I got no response, I guessed that Figure has not any serious norm. Now I am trying to avoid this topic, keeping the focus on my own online (dynamic) IQ tests.

**23. A panoramic perspective can come from the gifted, but numerous gifted individuals specialize and think deep thoughts about a single topic. What personality characteristics seem to separate the gifted generalists and the gifted specialists?**

First of all, their persistence and the interest in the specific topic, but there could be so many elements that we should take into account. Modern sciences require to do so if we hope to achieve something great. Perhaps, the last person with a very deep knowledge of an entire field of science was the Italian physicist Enrico Fermi.

**24. How did you create, develop, and sustain sPIqr Society up to the present?<sup>7</sup>**

I founded sPIqr at the beginning of 2010, creating a website and a mailing list while, a few months later, I created the Facebook group too. I cover its costs using the small (one time) membership fee paid by members who join the 1/5000 society, even if I let somebody join for free if he has a real reason that prevent him from paying.

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<sup>7</sup> Please see LinkedIn. (2015). Marco Ripà. Retrieved from <https://it.linkedin.com/pub/marco-rip%C3%A0/14/991/950>.

**25. What is the total number and general personality profile of the sPIQr membership – aside from nationality and IQ rarity?**

sPIQr full members are obviously very smart, we have a member who gained his bachelor degree as a teenager and a few other child prodigies, but there are also some gifted underachievers. The full membership status requires to go beyond the 153 SD=15 mark on two different kind of tests, so sPIQr members are usually skilled in different fields, loving mathematics, poetry, writing and so on. Many of them are listed on a lot of high IQ societies and they like logics and IQ tests, caring about the cause of the group: to try and help gifted pupils in their schools, spreading IQ knowledge and related issues all over the world.

**26. You speak five languages at various levels of proficiency including Italian (native), English (professional), French (professional), Spanish (limited working), and Latin (limited working).<sup>8</sup> Where does this linguistic talent source itself?**

I do not consider myself very good at languages, including English. However, trying to understand what I read I have learnt some English by myself and a little Spanish in just two weeks when I was at the university (in Italy we study Latin during our high school years, translating ancient poets and statesman from Latin to Italian). Last year I started to study French because my (former) girlfriend and I were planning to go and live in Geneva, together. Unfortunately our relationship broke-off before our common project could have been realized.

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<sup>8</sup> Please see LinkedIn. (2015). Marco Ripà. Retrieved from <https://it.linkedin.com/pub/marco-rip%C3%A0/14/991/950>.

**27. What benefits have accrued throughout professional and personal life because of them to you?**

Let me skip this point answering the question with another one: “Can we say that this wonderful interview is not enough?”

**28. You host an Italian language (with English translation possibilities) YouTube channel.<sup>9</sup> What is the core content of the channel?**

Well, thanks for asking. I opened the channel in 2006 when YouTube was far smaller than the large community we can see nowadays... it was just a (small) fitness channel focused on home training: I used the channel to share my lifts on a thematic forum to improve my form and technique.

A few months ago I decided to move the channel on IQ related topics, talking about giftedness, IQ tests, Asperger Syndrome (yeah, I am an Aspie too), physics, etc... I would like to share the first spatial dynamic IQ test and the other project (related to IQ as well) we are working on through this powerful platform at the right time (very soon).

**29. Fitness training regimens can differ in the scope and intensity of recommendations for the trainees by the trainer. In terms of the long-term fitness training regimen**

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<sup>9</sup> Please see YouTube. (n.d.). Marco Ripà. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/user/marcokrt>.

**recommendations from you, such as those through the YouTube channel, what general fitness training regimen recommendations should most people most of the time practice for general health in terms of aerobic, balance, strength, and stretch health?**

My personal suggestion is to avoid powerlifting and bodybuilding, while aerobic training and/or practicing a good martial art as an amateur would be a good idea. I regret the hard lifts I did in the past ten years.

**30. Where do these interests source themselves for you?**

Very hard to say, I guess they can be in some way related to the giftedness plus Asperger combo. I do not think that I could have been influenced by family, peers or school in this way.

**31. Asperger's Syndrome exists as a pervasive developmental disorder (PDD). Insofar as this ubiquitous developmental disorder expresses itself in the daily lives of those with its symptoms across its spectrum, and from the 31 years of personal experience, if I may ask, what advantages and disadvantages come with Asperger's Syndrome?**

I tried and explained what Asperger is in a video loaded on Youtube a couple of months ago. However, generally speaking, living with the Asperger is not very nice and Aspies are hardly understood by neurotypicals. We are hypersensitive people, reconnecting ourselves with our childhood; we can feel depressed for no reason, there is an higher risk of suicide and

meltdowns are not so infrequent between us. I admitted to have the Asperger as an adult and I simply lived my life without caring so much about this PDD, my thought was that I was simply “uncommon”, with my occasional fixations and hobbies.

**32. How can an individual with the syndrome capitalize on the advantages, and re-formulate thoughts and behaviour around the disadvantages, to create a better life for their self and those of value to them?**

As I just said, forgetting to be “so strange” (sometime) could be a good strategy to avoid to use the Asperger’s Syndrome as an excuse for not achieving our best in everything we start. On the contrary, being an Aspie can turn into an advantage too, because it helps us to stay more focused on the project we are involved in. As an example, you can think to Satoshi Tajiri, the creator of the Pokémon!

**33. Some stories come to mind about the nature of someone living with Asperger's Syndrome and the need for companionship. In light of this line of discussion, if I may, I will relate one narrative for a moment. Tim Page, a music critic, lives with Asperger's Syndrome, and the late Glenn Gould, had, quite probably, either autism or Asperger's Syndrome, and Page notes the loneliness for himself in a life with the syndrome and without friendship and companionship in terms of relationship with kin. Once Page met Gould, Page described that as a friendship at first sight - so to speak. Music existed as a deep passion for them and the bridge for the oft-sought friendship and companionship for them. For those in the present or the far future who happen to read this portion of**

**the interview and live with Asperger's Syndrome, any advice to them on acquiring the kinship of mind desired by possibly some, or even most, with Asperger's Syndrome?**

It would be very hard to predict when “friendship” and/or “love” will knock at your door, but if you will keep it open no one will knock at it... thus, Asperger individuals have a good chance to open it at the right person, bearing in mind that we are hypersensitive too. I met my best friend when we were 5 years old and he is a neurotypical man, even if many people I know teasingly call me “Sheldon”, referring to the famous BBT character.

**34. What does audio-visual media provide in contrast to print media for self-expression?**

I think that both of them can reach the same goal through different paths, it depends on who uses them and how he communicates to his audience. In general, the audio-visual can be a more informal way to share yourself and your character, while print media are more professional and better to communicate, technical and professional contents. To be more specific, I found YouTube very good for tutorials.

**35. What general philosophy seems the most correct to you?**

“Est modus in rebus”. It is a quote by the Latin poet Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus) from his “Satires 1” that resumes the idea of “Aurea Mediocritas”, meaning that extremes are dangerous and it would be better to try and reach moderation in everything. This is what I would like to achieve, even if I am still far from this personal goal.

**36. What ethical philosophy seems the most correct to you?**

I have a strong set of moral and ethical values. I am aware of the fact that morality is derived from evolutionary rules of mankind looking at man as a “social animal” by nature; despite of this my keywords are: benevolence, meritocracy (in employment settings) and social justice.

**37. What political philosophy seems the most correct to you?**

Italy is well known for its food and for Mafia, so I have to put my two cents on a governance or authority able to enforce justice, laws and to establish a legal code that remains the same for every citizen.

**38. What social philosophy seems the most correct to you?**

I think that every human being should have the same opportunities: the true substantive equality is the enhancement of individuality.

**39. What economic philosophy seems the most correct to you?**

Considering the tradeoff between efficiency and equality, I would choose the second one...

**40. General moderation, and benevolence, meritocracy, and social justice grounded in evolutionary theory, and enforcement of justice, laws, and a legal code for each citizen by governance, and true equality through enhanced individualism, and a focus on economic equality. What unites these in a singular philosophical framework?**

Civilization.

## (Part Three)

### Abstract

**An interview with Marco Ripà. He discusses: interest in arts and culture, children, economic empowerment, human rights, education, and science and technology; accrued benefits from them; changes to the educational systems of the world; development of an educational system to provide for the needs of the gifted population; most important global problems; solutions to them; policies and economic system for “equitable redistribution”; remedies for problems of diet, fitness, and social connections; a general moral, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional progression or development; ultimate relationship between consciousness and the universe; differentiation of “mankind” from the rest of the animal kingdom; relationship of mathematics to the operation of the universe; ease of correspondence due to accident/chance, design/teleology, or an alternate possibility; reasonableness of artificial intelligence with consciousness in the near future; major organizations devoted to similar causes; Gino Strada and his wife; myths around the gifted and talented population; possible motivation for the one third of underachievers in the gifted population; truths to dispel the myths; shared concern for the gifted population, especially the young; responsibilities of the gifted population towards society and culture; reason for thinking this; argument for provision for this sector of society; person of most influence on him; personal heroes in history; personal heroes in the present; smartest person he’s ever met, Evangelos Katsioulis; most creative people he’s ever met, Manahel Thabet and Enrico Preziosi; most intelligent person to have ever lived in human history without necessary overlap with IQ; the future for gifted and talented education in Italy; best untimed, power, intelligence test; technological advancement and the gifted and**

**talented landscape influence in education, in governmental policy, in socio-cultural life, in their definition; upcoming collaborative projects; upcoming solo projects; and near and far future for the ultra-high-IQ community.**

*Keywords:* Evangelos Katsioulis, gifted, Gino Strada, IQ, mankind, Marco Ripà, talented, ultra-high-IQ, universe, young.

**41. You have in interest arts and culture, children, economic empowerment, human rights, education, and science and technology.<sup>10</sup> Why these interests?**

When you feel that something is wrong around you and inside you, almost every day of your life, you start to search a response, but there is no solution and every answer brings two or more questions. An endless process, a continuous search for the unknown.

**42. What benefits accrue from them?**

Keep thinking in order to avoid what I prefer to forget, I mean: “To preserve a flexible and curious brain”, just as children do.

**43. If you could, how would you change the educational systems of the world?**

My dream would be to see an educational system that is not stereotyped, that can adapt itself to individualities, allowing pupils, children and boys to express their full potential and

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<sup>10</sup> Please see LinkedIn. (2015). Marco Ripà. Retrieved from <https://it.linkedin.com/pub/marco-rip%C3%A0/14/991/950>.

capabilities for the benefit of society. There should not be “better” or “worse”, just different people on the same world.

**44. In particular, how would you develop an educational system to provide for the needs of the gifted population?**

Through acceleration, curricular enrichment and curriculum compacting, this means to let the educational system be more flexible, introducing a preliminary screening for every pupil of a class. A good solution would be to combine a collective IQ test with an individual one (e.g., Raven’s Coloured Progressive Matrices with a cut-off at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile plus WISC for pupils above 120 SD=15). You can find more info here:

<http://www.slideshare.net/marcokrt/identifiyng-gifted-children-and-dyslexia-early-diagnosis-risk-of-cheating-on-iq-tests>

**45. What global problems do you consider most important at the moment?**

Food. Food is life and there is a very strong link between food and global health: unfortunately this is still a massive issue for too many people around the world.

**46. How would you solve them?**

Reducing the inequality of income and wealth, forcing towards a more equitable redistribution of them, spreading the growth opportunities from the most privileged people to the forgotten ones.

**47. What policies and economic system would further this “equitable redistribution”?**

Inequality directly undermines equality of opportunities: it entrenches immobility also affecting opportunity on a daily basis, leading to inefficiency. Thus, the classic and aforementioned trade-off between equity and efficiency is not a dogma, if we can find a good approach to use the new “capabilities” for achieving and sustaining the growth. So, my favorite model is definitely Martha Nussbaum’s theory of justice: it is focused on some fundamental capabilities, dignity and a threshold, expanding Sen’s capabilities approach.

**48. Insofar as the global health issues relate to poor diet – noted in question 46, poor fitness regimens, and poor social connections with the introduction of modern technology too, what means seem to provide the remedies for each of these problems of diet, fitness, and social connections aside from equitable redistribution?**

Informing children and their families about the risks of those “modern age mistakes”, as much as possible, would be a good starting point.

**49. If you do consider a general moral, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional progression or development, how do you view development from the basic to most advanced levels at the individual and collective level?**

This is a hard question for me and I can only guess something about living in peace as a group rather than living for ourselves looking for others approval, hoping in their envy to be recognized as “winners”. I do not know why I am here, on this strange world, nor if there exists any reason to be here, but here we are and I feel that it is important to help those who are unlucky to be proud of us. We cannot forget that we are just men, calling us “mankind”.

**50. What is the ultimate relationship between consciousness and the universe?**

Being conscious of ourselves is what makes us to feel alive. The whole universe is around and inside us: an exterminate, multidimensional, place in the pocket of a single brain.

**51. Based on personal analysis, what differentiates "mankind" from the rest of the animal kingdom?**

As Albert Einstein explained to a little child, we are smart animals, but just animals: our brain should be the key to raise mankind above animal level, and a good help was given by the opposable thumb. Unfortunately there would be a second answer to the same question: human beings are more cruel than the rest of the animal kingdom, what a big difference a smart brain makes!

**52. What explains the relationship of mathematics to the operation of the universe?**

This is the task of the philosophy of mathematics and I do not want to take away the big answer to Hilary Putnam and his heirs.

**53. Does this ease of correspondence seem based on accident/chance, design/teleology, or an alternate possibility to you?**

The only thing I can argue here is that both mathematics and the Universe seem to equipose their rules and formulas, Galois showed this with his group theory too. I like very much asymmetrical formulas such as Maxwell's equations, describing all classical electromagnetic phenomena. Electromagnetism is one of the four fundamental forces (interactions) of Nature, indeed.

**54. Does the creation of an artificial intelligence with consciousness seem reasonable in the near future?**

I do not think so, but... "Who knows?". It is very hard to predict this: I am still trying to answer to "Why am I conscious about myself?" I think about it since I was a child and I have not solved the riddle after so many years.

**55. What other major organizations devoted to similar causes can you recommend for resources and support?**

UNICEF and Emergency (an Italian humanitarian NGO founded by Gino Strada and his wife in 1994).

**56. Please expand, who are Gino Strada and his wife?**

He is a brave medical doctor (surgeon) who said about himself “I am not a pacifist: I am against war!”. He and his wife, Teresa (who died in 2009), founded the humanitarian medical organization “Emergency”, officially not recognized as a NGO, with the aim to provide basic medical services to civilians in many countries devastated by wars. He is also an author and he openly opposed the Italian government for its support to the NATO in a peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan (the ISAF Operation).

**57. What myths exist around the gifted and talented population?**

It is quite common to assume that a gifted person should be good at school or that he will live a happy life: on the contrary, there is about one third of the gifted population that is composed of underachievers. Moreover, too many gifted men are nihilists or depressed, feeling sad most of the time.

**58. What might motivate this one third of underachievers in the gifted population to begin to achieve to some small, or even large, degree?**

They need to find a subject to study both challenging and interesting for them, feeling good at school and inside their class. It is not easy at all to achieve such a goal, but we have to do our best in order to reduce this big loss.

**59. What truths dispel them?**

“Truth” is relative and, in my humble opinion, it would have to be declined in as many meanings as we can see different cases and situations to apply it. Gifted or not, talented or not, first we are men who dream to be accepted as we are.

**60. You share a concern of mine. In particular, the sincere desire to assist the gifted population in flourishing, especially the young. Now, many organizations provide for the needs of the moderately gifted ability sectors of the general population, most often adults and sometimes children. However, few provide for the needs of children (and adults) in the high, profound, exceptional, or ‘unmeasurable’ ability sectors of the general population. Some organizations and societies provide forums, retreats, journals, intelligence tests, literature, or outlets for the highest ability sub-populations. What can individuals, organizations, and societies do to provide for the gifted population?**

It is just a matter of priority: “in primis” gifted children need to be accepted and supported by their family and by their school. Thus, they need to be identified during their early childhood... I think that this would be a very good starting point. We can do more for them, such as focusing our attention on their relationships with peers, the third pillar of a gifted children development in addition to “family” and “school” according to many experts (Monks et al.).

**61. In turn, what responsibilities do the gifted population have towards society and culture?**

If they are well-supported starting from their childhood, they will gain more chances to bring significant benefits to society contributing to science and human arts. In addition, they have to develop a deeper comprehension of mankind and the need of social justice, because they have the tools to better understand the world and the human behavior.

**62. Why do you think this?**

Because I am a gifted myself, I guess. Who knows?

**63. What argument most convinces you of the need to provide for this sector of society?**

It would be very sad to waste talent, because it is not true that gifted people always create their own opportunities if they cannot be supported by a good environment to let them grow-up in the right way. This would be a pity and a great loss for the whole society.

**64. Who most influenced you?**

When I was young, I was inspired by Dante Alighieri and Voltaire. Now that I am over 30, I still admire rebel geniuses, such as Évariste Galois and Friedrich *Nietzsche*.

**65. What personal heroes exist in history?**

I like very much Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, but some of my favorite historical heroes are Socrates, William Wallace, Newton, Tesla, Ettore Majorana, Mahatma Gandhi, the Tank Man and the Italian carabineer Salvo D'Acquisto.

**66. What about in the present?**

Three Nobel Laureates fighting poverty for more global justice: Malala Yousafzai, Kailash Satyarthi, Amartya Sen and his "*Capability Approach*".

**67. Who is the smartest person you've ever met?**

This is a really hard question, but, basing my guess on IQ performances only, my best choices are Evangelos Katsioulis and an Italian fellow student I met when we both attended Physics courses, his name is Sergio Simonella. I think he is a mathematician now and I remember he was really smart, a fast thinker too.

**68. Who is the most creative person you've ever met?**

Someone I see almost every time, walking next to a mirror... but I have not met a lot of people in my life. However, a couple of very creative person I met years ago are the entrepreneurs Manahel Thabet and Enrico Preziosi (owner of a famous toys brand).

**69. Who appears to be the most intelligent person to have ever lived in human history – not by necessity an overlap with IQ?**

In order to answer this question we should previously agree about a embraceable definition of “intelligence”. Anyway, could I guess “Johann Wolfgang von Goethe” instead of “Leonardo da Vinci” without making my compatriots getting angry? Perhaps it would be better to choose “the one who invented the wheel” and stay in peace.

**70. What lies in the future for gifted and talented education in Italy?**

Unfortunately, I cannot see any good news on the horizon. People keep talking about their “professional work” in this field, pushing parents to pay for a private screening, but nothing

is moving in Italian children's future, gifted or not. Considering how many spots about gambling our children watch, I fear a (big) blind future for them.

**71. What untimed, power, intelligence test seems the best to you?**

My favourite untimed test for the high range is Lato's LS36, because IMHO it still remains the best Gf loaded HRT. You can find similar ideas in latest HRTs and this proves that LS36 is a great test and that newest ones can suffer from the learning contamination effect, as explained here: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/144702702/HRTs-Big-Flaws>.

**72. How will the continued increase in the pace of technological advancement alter the gifted and talented landscape, for example, in education, in governmental policy, in socio-cultural life, in their definition, and so on?**

Looking at the Flynn effect, we could argue that the technological advancement increases people's IQ (gifted or not) as well. It is clear that computer based skills will become more and more important but, if you want to know more, I have to take the crystal ball and tie my turban.

**73. Any upcoming collaborative projects?**

I am currently involved in two "big" collaborative projects dealing with IQ: the first one will be an 8 hands platform to connect high IQ people and smart jobs offers, while the second one

is the aforementioned implementation of the Dynamic Spatial IQ Tests. I and Roberto Enea will work on it for the most part of the 2016 in order to achieve this ambitious goal. We have already started making a prototype of the system that let us check all the transformations we are going to use for every test. This tool will let us deepen the study of the tests in order to detect error conditions (e.g., multiple solutions) and it has been developed as a stand-alone application, even if our aim is to turn it into a web application during the first step and later into a smartphone application. In the web application we are going to apply all the security features necessary to guarantee the correctness and non-hackability of the test and at the same time the privacy of the scores.

**74. Any upcoming solo projects?**

I am currently focused on my YouTube channel [<https://www.youtube.com/user/marcokrt>] and I am still working on a few math papers concerning primes and the extended “Nine Dots Puzzle” [<http://nntdm.net/volume-20-2014/number-1/59-71/>].

**75. What near and far future seems most probable for the ultra-high-IQ community?**

In the near future I think that we keep on arguing about who has the highest IQ (sometimes taking many low quality tests and reporting only the top score). Many of us will continue to quietly writing books, feeling frustrated about the small numbers of people to talk to, and probably slightly more contact with one another online through Google Glass or so, ignoring bigger problems related with food lack, resources shortage, terrorism and overpopulation. I

hope there will not be a third world war and it will come true just my prediction concerning who has the highest IQ and Google Glass. Time will tell.

**Thank you for your time, Mr. Ripà.**

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