

Engaged Social Sciences

By Dr Kamil Wielecki:

Students: Wojciech Cendrowski; Piotr Chmielewski; Kornelia Kasperkiewicz

Faculty: Prof. Dorota Ławecka; Prof. Piotr Matczak; Prof. Jan Kieniewicz; Dr Franciszek Stępniewski; Dr hab. Robert Sucharski; Dr Kamil Wielecki (Head of the Section)

Description

The seminar will investigate wide scope of relationships between human groups and environment they live in. Various social sciences have discussed those relationships in manifold ways, however, a one uniting characteristics seemed to be a harsh distinction between subject and object of research. This distinction was a part of a positivist paradigm of social sciences in which “social” was less important than “sciences”. In other words, social sciences were viewed as a kind of natural sciences and in consequence they were thought to obligatory follow approach of the latter, including rigid oppositions between participant and observer, theory and experience, micro and macro, and finally, the boundaries between scientific disciplines. In the seminar, in turn, we will try to bring those oppositions into dialogue. We will consider principles of reflexive social sciences in which researchers get into a dynamic relationship with reality they investigate – be it other people, living organisms, cultural artefacts or non-organic nature.

Goals

The seminar will aim at supporting PhD Students in broadening their research perspectives and coining by them theoretical tools to develop their own projects. This will be done through close cooperation between all participants, common readings, presentations and discussions. Moreover, the goal of the seminar is to let the Students exercise their skills in formulating research problems and developing an interdisciplinary workshop to approach them. Finally, the Students will train their skills in organization and moderation of scholar events.

Schedule and requirements for the PhD Students

There will be 6 seminar meetings, each of them 3-class-hours-long. The meetings will be held in English and Polish, depending on the topic and presentation discussed.

In the first round of seminars, there will be 3 meetings organized by PhD Advisors in cooperation with Doctoral Students they mentor on the topics of their choice. The meetings should be devoted to broader theoretical or methodological issues that one finds pertinent to other members of the seminar.

In the second round of seminars, in a different mode, there will be 3 meetings organized by Doctoral Students in cooperation with their PhD Advisors. Each of the meetings will comprise 3 parts: introductions delivered by a PhD Advisor on the academic background of the doctoral dissertation he/she mentors; discussions on parts of dissertations proposed by PhD Students; discussion over texts a PhD Student finds particularly important in the context of his/her dissertation.

The specific requirements of the PhD Students are:

- To actively participate in every seminar meeting
- To cooperate with his/her PhD Advisor in organization one from the first round of seminars (the scope of cooperation should be discussed with the organizer. It might be, for instance, preparing a case study that illustrates the presented problem or summarizing a journal article)
- To organize one meeting from the second round of seminars, i.e. to consult the scope of introduction made by a PhD Advisor, to prepare a section of his/her dissertation for critical

reading and propose a text he/she finds important in the context of his/her research. The proposed section of PhD thesis should be a new one (i.e. not presented earlier during other activities within the Nature-Culture Program).

The final assessment of the PhD Students will depend on the quality of filling the requirements listed above.

All preparatory materials for each of the meetings should be distributed among the participants of the seminar at least one week in advance.

The meetings will take place on Fridays: December 10, January 21, February 25, March 18, April 22, and May 20 between 9:30 - 11:45 am.