

Culture and Inequality: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches

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Course content:

The seminar focuses on the complex relationship between culture and society. It investigates the role of culture in reproducing, consolidating, or challenging, existing structures of power and inequality, as well as forms of discrimination and oppression in terms of class, gender, race and nation. Combining theoretical perspectives with empirical research it offers an introduction to the study of complex issues, such as social exclusion, poverty, and racism. Drawing upon seminal works of scholars like Bourdieu, Bauman, Sayer, Sennett, Wacquant, Paugam, Hall, Rex, Young, Butler, and Fraser the seminar aims to shed some light on the experiences and responses to material and symbolic inequalities in everyday life, and on practices of oppression and domination and on the struggles for emancipation.

The seminar consists of two modules that have theoretical and empirical orientation respectively and cover the following study topics: 1. Distinction and the experience of class 2. Places of poverty, deprivation, and exclusion. 3. Old and new racisms - ethnicities, and diasporas. 4. Women's oppression and gendered relations of power. 5. Social inclusion policies: contemporary challenges and dilemmas. Through the study topics the seminar will illustrate how emotions, meanings and systems of group and community values can contribute to the formation of either hierarchical relationships and competitive identities, or to equal and cooperative relationships in everyday life. It points out how wider social processes, such as ideologies, collective representations, class cultures, cultural institutions and social policies, create or deconstruct symbolic borders, obscure or disclose inequality.

The aim is to familiarize students with important theoretical approaches, interpretative tools and methodological strategies in international studies of inequality. In addition, the seminar will provide an opportunity for discussion and reflection on empirical research on poverty and precarity, the refugee and the humanitarian crisis, gender and racial discrimination, solidarity cultures, discourses and policies of social integration in modern Greece.

Ενδεικτική βιβλιογραφία/ Indicative bibliography:

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