Syllabus and Reading List

The bond between politics and economy which predominated the theories of the classical economists of the 18th and 19th century has been broken by the analysis of orthodox economists, resulting in the attribution to the discipline of economics of positivistic characteristics, linked exclusively to the study and interpretation of the rational behavior of individuals. Thus the individual social and economic action is identified exclusively as rational or irrational in the sense of exploiting the most appropriate and efficient means for the fulfillment of selfish goals. Furthermore, values and cultural characteristics either are not part of the examination and interpretation of the economic behavior of the individual, or consist merely of manifestations of irrational formulations of the action. As a result, economics is dominated by the scientific logic of the establishment of laws of economic behavior.

However, as pointed out by Talcott Parsons, individual action is unitary and not divided into sections of pure economic or social behavior.

Considering all the above, in the framework of the seminar the relation of economics with both the political and the social science will be examined from an epistemological and methodological perspective, through the theories of the classical economists of the 19th and 20th century. Specifically we will deal with concrete issues in the theories of Marshall, Pareto, Weber, Durkheim, Popper, Lakatos, and Parsons.

Indicative bibliography


