



## **DESIGNING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS** **Geography Graduate School Intensive Course**

*Department of Regional Studies  
University of Tampere, Finland,  
24.-25. February 2011*

This intensive course will focus on the research design and the role of empirical data and its analysis as one focal point of the research process. Careful research design covers the whole research process from the first research ideas to the reporting of the results. The aim of the intensive course is to stress the role of research strategy as a means to envision the whole research process and to clarify the interconnectedness of analytical set-up, data collection or acquisition, research methods and analytical tools and frameworks. Students are encouraged to become more aware of their choices and critically view the relationships between theoretical, methodological and empirical commitments of their research design. Particular focus is paid on analysis of empirical materials. How and why particular methods are used? Are the choices made in integrity with the selected methodological approaches? And how these often “hidden” ontological and methodological commitments should be written as part of the research report?

The keynote lectures are given by two internationally acknowledged scholars: **Professor of Geopolitics Klaus Dodds** (University of London, Royal Holloway) and **Professor of Human Geography Pauliina Raento** (University of Helsinki). Keynote lectures discuss the possibilities and challenges of visual methodology in studying the politicisation of everyday practices and visual culture. The lectures are followed by workshops in which the students present their work in progress. Every workshop is chaired by post-doctoral researcher. The intensive course welcomes contributions by

all doctoral students, whose interest are connected to environmental or geographical research and methodology in social sciences.

## **COURSE PROGRAM**

*Thursday 24.2.2011*

- 10:15 - 11:45 **Keynote lecture by Professor Klaus Dodds: Popular geopolitics and visual methodology: Learning from cartoons, films and postcards** (Lecture room, Väinö Linna)
- 11:45 - 13:15 *Lunch break*
- 13:15 - 15:00 **Student paper workshops** (Three thematic groups, Pinni A)
- 15:00 - 15:15 *Coffee break (coffee and tea included)*
- 15:15 - 17:00 **workshops continues** (Pinni A)
- 19:00 - Evening program (place to be announced later)

In Thursday participants are divided in to three thematic workshops (*work language mainly Finnish*)

- **Recognising and revealing the methodological commitments** (Chair: Pia Bäcklund, Pinni A, Ls 2052)
- **From analysis to interpretations: how to build credible arguments?** (Chair: Maria Åkerman, Pinni A, Ls 5060)
- **The challenges of data collection and analysis** (Chair: Anna-Kaisa Kuusisto-Arponen, Pinni A, 3028)

*Friday 25.2.2011*

- 9:15 – 10.45 **Keynote lecture by Professor Pauliina Raento: Looking at leisure: Image, identity, and intertextuality. (Lecture room, Pinni A, Paavo Koli)**
- 10:45-11.00 *Coffee break (coffee and tea included)*
- 11:00 - 11:45 **The power of methodology –panel discussion (Lecture room, Pinni A, Paavo Koli** (Dodds, Raento Bäcklund, Kuusisto-Arponen, Åkerman)
- 11:45 - 13:15 *Lunch break*
- 13:15 - 15:00 **How to write the methodological commitments in to your Ph.D. thesis?** (Student workshop, all groups together, Bäcklund, Kuusisto-Arponen, Åkerman) (Pinni A, Ls 5060)
- 15:00 – 15:15 **Closing discussion** (Pinni A, Ls 5060)

### **Call for papers**

Ph.D. students who wish to attend the workshops are asked to submit a short essay of maximum five pages (can be written in Finnish), in which the following issues of their own Ph.D. thesis are discussed:

All participants should handle following themes:

- Describe shortly your theme in Ph.D. thesis, the research questions and the methods used (max. one page).
- How do I define methodology in my research at this point of my research?
- What kind of challenges in the research design I have already met in my own research process?

In addition describe **two or three** of the following issues in the last part of your essay:

- What kind of challenges have you had in defining your methodological orientation?

- What kind of philosophical commitments you recognise in your methodological framework?
- What kind of concrete research methods have you used/ planned to use?
- Why have you chosen a particular data/ how does it correspond to your research questions?
- Why have you chosen a particular theoretical framework?
- What choices have you made while defining the empirical data (the size and type of sample etc.)?
- What kind of difficulties have you had in proceeding from analysis to interpretations?
- What kind of generalisations have you made/ have planned to make and on what basis?
- What kind of difficulties and challenges have you faced during your research?

Send the essay by email attachment (in PDF-format) to Senior Lecturer Anna-Kaisa Kuusisto-Arponen by the **31<sup>st</sup> of January 2011** (email: [anna-kaisa.kuusisto@uta.fi](mailto:anna-kaisa.kuusisto@uta.fi)). Include also the wish in which workshop you would like to be and if you want to discuss in English. Note: choose the group which theme at the moment is the most challenging in your on Ph.D. process. Please note that mainly the students of Geography Graduate School will get support to the travel and accommodation costs in the limits of the budget available.