

PhD Thesis Acceptance Report
Research Discipline Council of Biological Sciences
Jagiellonian University in Kraków

Candidate's name and surname: *Sayantani Basak*

PhD Thesis Title: *Spatio-Temporal and Social Dimensions of Human-Wildlife Interactions.*

Thesis Supervisor: *Dr. hab Izabela A. Wierzbowska*

Assistant Supervisor / Second Supervisor/ Co-supervisor (if applicable):

Reviewer: Prof. dr hab. Piotr Tryjanowski (Uniwersytet Przyrodniczy w Poznaniu)

THESIS EVALUATION

1. **Scientific merit of the thesis**

a. Originality of the research (25-200 words):

Thesis *Spatio-Temporal and Social Dimensions of Human-Wildlife Interactions* is an intellectual answer to increased urbanization processes in the global scale, especially on increased potential conflicts between human and wildlife, especially in urban ecosystems. The thesis contains three already published articles in journals with IF. (To note – one paper is presented as a manuscript resubmitted to the journal, but it is currently published in *Ecological Indicators*). Research is original, and fits to very well currently developed ideas on this important, but problematic, issue.

b. Scientific merit of the chapters / articles (25-200 words):

The three chapters – already published articles in the scientific journals – are very well organized. Step by step, from review of already published papers through public perceptions and attitudes toward urban wildlife, to the effect of lockdowns on animals (last two results were obtained in local scale), solved more general problem called Human-Wildlife Interactions. I would like to underline big sample size in the second study, and repetition of public perception to the same animals after decade. We really see how fast changes are in the cities.

2. **Substantial merit of the thesis**

(ability to introduce the research topic and clarity of research hypotheses, the choice of research methods and statistical tools for data analysis, presentation and critical analysis of the research data, the ability to discuss research data and the theoretical background, clarity and quality of the conclusions) (25-200 words):

Sayantani Basak in the dissertation clearly introduced her research topics in context of international literature and well identified research gaps. She put clear hypotheses to particular parts of her job – scientific articles. Results are presented in clear way, and some case additional analyses are also provided as supplementary materials, the study can be repeated in the future. Conclusions are presented both to each part of the study, as well as for the whole dissertation. I like especially the last part on the future perspective.

It is presented as an open-minded view and has an underlined place for future collaboration between different stakeholders, but also researchers from different disciplines (not only biological ones).

3. **Layout and register**

(*layout, register and the clarity of the language, the quality of the visual material etc.*)
(25-200 words):

The dissertation is prepared in more or less classic way. The non – published parts are presented as classical manuscript (sometimes with small errors in layout – see page 6 – but maybe it is a kind of saving space), the two published chapters are presented as printed articles from journals: *Science of the Total Environment* and *Scientific Reports*, respectively). Even in case of already printed paper, we received additional materials – supplementary data, e.g., used questionnaires – BTW, I am pretty sure that during the study the authors used materials prepared in Polish, but are presented only the English version).

4. **Critical notes**

Well, it is very difficult to add some more merit points to already published papers, in quite good journals, after evaluations by the referees and editors, probably – I think, and I hope so – very good specialists in the field. Then my comments have rather very minor character. For instance, in the “Summary” the author mentioned effect of COVID-19 on behaviour of animals that effect is not very well known (pages 1 and 4 – in Polish *Streszczenie*). It WAS true, but now are some discussions even on “covidisation” of science that too much attention was paid to the last pandemic situation.

In the article one – the authors wrote (page 19) that to date there was not a review on this subject, but it is not true and some reviews were already published, but not exactly using the same methodological assumptions (in fact HWC is very general sometimes and should be presented in very precise way).

On page 20 are mentioned methods (data come from WoS and SCOPUS). It is so late, because the paper is already published, but I think it may produce very biased results, because omit some interesting local studies. Perhaps even HWC are more important in very local, than broader scale. A kind of solution would be using Google Scholar – but it is just my impression.

In the discussion of the paper 1 (page 34) the authors mentioned a lot how people see some of animals. Well, I suggest being very sensitive with generalization, because – especially in questionnaires 0 declarations are not really facts, and can be tested in practice – I saw in my career how positive attitudes to some animals changed fast, when it was not theoretical only, but really practical conflict (e.g. attack of wolf on sheep herd, damage of wild boars in gardens etc.).

And small technical note – on the page 123 are mentioned squirrels (mammals should be to be precise) and birds – different taxonomic levels.

5. **Final grade** (justification 25-200 words):

Definitely it is good dissertation, well prepared, both from intellectual, as well as technical point of view. I also check statements by the co-authors of published papers and the role of **Syantani Basak** was always crucial (more or equal 55%). The dissertation was prepared in standard way, three chapters as already published as scientific articles, and even were already cited few times, what is a good prognostic signal to reception of **Syantani Basak** work by a scientific community.

I, hereby, declare that the reviewed PhD thesis by **Syantani Basak** meets the criteria pursuant to art. 187 of Act of 20 July 2018 The Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1668, as amended) and request that the Research Discipline Council of Biological Sciences of the

Jagiellonian University in Kraków accepts **Syantani Basak** for further stages of doctoral proceedings in the field of exact and biological sciences, in the discipline of biological sciences.

YES/NO


Jednoznacznie stwierdzam, iż rozprawa doktorska Pani mgr Syantani Basak spełnia warunki określone w artykule 187 Ustawy z dnia 20 lipca 2018 r. Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce (Dz. U. z 2018 r. poz. 1668 z póź. zm.).

I, hereby, request that the thesis is accepted with distinctions. Justification (25-200 words)

YES/NO

Important parts of the thesis are already published in very good journals, what is also a good predictor of quality. However, the most important point, is the subject was important and definitely worth of deep study. The aims were clear, used methods, kind of analyses are over standards and good practices.

26/06/2023
date

KIEROWNIK
KATEDRY ZOOLOGII

Prof. dr hab. Piotr Talar
Reviewer's signature

INFORMATION FOR THE REVIEWER:

1. Information on requirements concerning PhD thesis structure:
http://www.wb.uj.edu.pl/en_GB/stopnie-tytuly/doktoraty
2. A digital copy should be sent to:
nauki.biologiczne@uj.edu.pl

A duly signed original should be sent to:

**Rada Dyscypliny Nauki biologiczne
Dziekanat Wydziału Biologii
Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie
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