

International Winter School

The method of imagination

Call for participants



The Centre for Cultural psychology at Aalborg University is organizing the first early-stage researchers International Winter School on “The method of imagination” open to PhD and Post-doc students. The winter school will take place in Klitgaarden at Skagen, North Denmark, February 18-21 2016.

Overview

The winter school goal is to mobilize the early-stage researchers' excellences (PhD students and early-stage researchers) in the new multidisciplinary field of study of imagination. Imaginative processes are always at stake in art, education, scientific work, business, politics, they are also involved in decision-making, creativity, psychotherapy. The scientific purpose of the winter school is to provide an introduction to the study of imagination as autonomous interdisciplinary field of study in social and human sciences, by providing a very early opportunity of international publication to young and promising scholars, who can provide with a significant and visionary contribution to the advancement of knowledge in this new field. The Conference is organized by the Centre for Cultural Psychology, Aalborg University, that is becoming a leading location in the field of cultural psychology.

Format and activities

The winter school applies an innovative format, combining presentations, experiential sessions and group work on a small team of about 15 participants. The conference duration is 4 days in the amazing venue of Klitgaarden at Skagen, North Denmark. The conference language will be English. The outcomes of the conference will be a special issue in a peer-reviewed. Participants will receive a certificate of 5 ECTS. Participants will receive preliminary readings and will be asked to prepare a short draft of future research project on imagination in their area of interest. Participants will also have the opportunity to participate in the annual Niels Bohr Lecture that takes place February 15 and 16 2015 at Aalborg University.

The winter school will help to develop, theoretically and empirically, a new conception of imagination, as a fundamental higher psychological function that is devoted to the semiotic manipulation of complex wholes of iconic and linguistic signs. Therefore, the winter school explores the following themes:

- The concept of imagination and its history;
- The method of thinking through which imagination works;
- Imagination as a method for the creation of new knowledge, in art, science and social issues;
- Exploring new methodologies for studying imagination through the combination of several methods, the study of complex products (e.g. art, kitchen, religion, etc.).

The invited lectures by international scholars of excellence will cover different areas of humanities. The invited speakers are:

- Professor Jaan Valsiner: director of the Centre for Cultural Psychology and one of the world-leading figures in current psychology.
- Sheldon Brown: combines computer science research with vanguard cultural production. He is the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Endowed Chair of Digital Media and Learning at UCSD, and is the Director of the Arthur C. Clarke Center for Human Imagination.
- João Manuel Castro Faria Salgado: Head of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, at Instituto Superior da Maia (ISMAI), Portugal. Head of the PhD Program in Clinical Psychology at Instituto Superior da Maia, (ISMAI), Portugal.
- Prof. Giuseppina Marsico: expert in educational psychology and mereotopology, University of Salerno, Italy.
- Maria Cláudia Santos Lopes de Oliveira: is member of the Laboratory of Microgenesis of Social Interactions, at the Department of Educational and developmental Psychology, University of Brasília, Brazil.

Scientific Background

The winter school will explore imagination as a process of creating new knowledge from experiencing, involving affective semiosis, abstraction and reification, metaphorical and metonymical signs elaborations. Imaginative processes are a way of creating abstractions treating them as real things and creating concrete images treating them as abstractions. As a peculiar form of knowing, instead, imagination is at work in several contexts of everyday life and it is related to other higher mental processes and functions (memory, fantasy, emotion, judgment, problem solving, etc.). It is also a process through which we construct collective products that become social realities and through which we construct our relationship with the environment.

Psychological sciences and philosophy are accumulating theoretical and empirical evidences supporting the crucial role of imaginative processes in everyday life, in remembering and in problem solving. Nevertheless, psychology is still understanding imagination as the process of representing and operating on mental images or equating it with fantasy, neglecting the affective, social, cultural and contextual dimensions of imagination. The winter school is strongly interdisciplinary and adopts an experiential approach, to provide an environment in which young researchers can present their works, but also develop and fertilize them creating a networking opportunity, in a full-immersion convivial experience that will combine lecturing, workshop sessions, field trips and hands-on activities, aimed at supporting participants in the integration and development of the new construct of imagination in their own research, implying a wider concept of the data gathering and analysis, that requires a development of the current qualitative methods to include complex products of imaginative processes. In the context of the re-appreciation of imagination in process today in several fields, and the invited speakers will provide concrete examples of imaginative processes e.g. in architecture, natural sciences, humanities, social change, and therapy. This wide look is related to the role of imagination as an interface between individual and collective dimensions, or as a way to overcome the traditional distinction between human and natural sciences, understanding the relationship between humans and environment as a co-developmental one.

Preliminary scientific program (the final program will be available in January)

Feb 18	From 13.00: Welcome and registration Afternoon: from 14 to 19
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	Lecture: Jaan Valsiner, Aalborg University Interactive Session 1: presentation and discussion of participants' papers. chair Brady Wagoner Experiential session: exercise of guided imagination Dinner
Feb 19	Morning: from 9 to 13 Field experience: imagination and human/environment relationship Lunch break Afternoon: from 14 to 19 Lecture: Sheldon Brown, Arthur C. Clarke Center for Human Imagination Interactive Session 2: presentation and discussion of participants' papers, chair: Luca Tateo Interactive Session 3: presentation and discussion of participants' papers, chair: Maria Cláudia Santos Lopes de Oliveira Dinner
Feb 20	Morning: from 9 to 13 Lecture: João Manuel Castro Faria Salgado Interactive Session 4: presentation and discussion of participants' papers, Chair Giuseppina Marsico Lunch break Afternoon: from 14 to 19 Experiential session: methods of analysis on the Scandinavian landscape painting, chair Vlad Glaveanu Interactive Session 5: presentation and discussion of participants' papers, chair Brady Wagoner Dinner
Feb 21	Morning: from 9 to 13 Small-group sessions: Sharing and implementing participants' research projects Plenary discussion: Developing the new theoretical and methodological directions to study imagination, chair Jaan Valsiner Wrap up, establishing networking, special issue preparation and goodbye to next winter school Lunch break Departure to Aalborg

Registration and fees

Early stage researchers (PhD, Post-doc, young researchers) in all disciplines are welcome. The max number of participants is 20. Participation fee is DKK 5200 (approx. €700 or \$ 790) and includes: registration fee, 4 days accommodation at Skagen, didactic materials, meals and shuttle from Aalborg to Skagen. The venue is the amazing Klitgaarden residence (<http://www.klitgaarden.dk/>) in Skagen.

Registration and payment will be open from November 1st 2015 until January 10th 2016, through the e-form on Centre for Cultural Psychology website (<https://www.erap.aau.dk/event/index.php/winter2016>).

Local Organizing Committee and contacts

For any inquiry about the winter school please visit our website (www.ccp.aau.dk) or contact: Centre for Cultural Psychology, Aalborg University, Kroghstræde 3, Room 4.219, DK-9220 Aalborg Øst, Denmark, Tel: (+45) 9940 3177

E-mail: luca@hum.aau.dk, mkat@hum.aau.dk

www.ccp.aau.dk

Codice campomodificato

The local teaching staff and organizing committee is composed by: Prof. Luca Tateo, coordinator; Prof. Jaan Valsiner, director of the Centre for Cultural psychology; Brady Wagoner, coordinator of the PhD program in cultural psychology; Prof. Vlad Glaveanu and Prof. Lene Tangaard experts in creativity and co-directors of the Centre for Cultural Psychology of Creativity; Prof. Nikita Kharlamov, expert of cultural psychology and human geography; Morten Kattenhøj, Project Academic Officer.