



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Halduskultuur

*Administrative culture. Административная культура.
Verwaltungskultur. Hallintokulttuuri*

Department of Political Science
and Department of Aesthetics
University of Helsinki

CALL FOR PAPERS

Halduskultuur is publishing a special issue in the fall of 2006 on the Aesthetics of Administration, guest edited by Eugenie A. Samier (Simon Fraser University, Canada) of the journal editorial board. Prior to the Special Issue, *Halduskultuur*, in cooperation with the Political Science Department and Aesthetics Department of the University of Helsinki, is hosting a two-day conference on the aesthetics of government on 27 April in Helsinki and 28 April in Tallinn. We invite papers exploring any aesthetic aspect of political and administrative practice. While aesthetic analysis is newly established in organisational theory and political analysis, it has yet to be applied to studies of government, particularly public administration.

The aesthetic consists of the means by which organisational form is created, shaping the world and mentality of politicians and administrators. This ranges from the physical environment through buildings and their furnishings and decorations, to the interactional through performative and theatrical expression, and the use of language through its literary or poetic qualities. An aesthetic critique provides a new interdisciplinary and humanities-based approach to organisational politics, ideology, culture and ethics as it applies to all aspects of political activity and administrative responsibilities (e.g. decision-making, policy, management).

Papers are invited that explore philosophical and theoretical aspects of the aesthetics of government, critical and interpretive investigations of political and administrative practices, and research approaches in the field. The philosophical origins of social aesthetic as it informs governmental practice can be found in the classical writings of Plato and Aristotle, establishing a tradition that is carried through the Enlightenment period through such authors as Kant, Baumgarten, and Schelling, and into later modern philosophy of the Romantic tradition, Nietzsche, Hegel, Collingwood, the pragmatic school, Bourdieu, Hermeneutics, and Critical Theory, etc. An additional important dimension is an evaluation of aesthetic sources for critique - architecture, theatre, literature, music and film - as they serve both to understand the social construction of politics and administration and provide a critique of values, roles, power and authority.

More applied aesthetic theory focuses on the implications for professional practice: the ways ideas and ideals are created, how their expression is conveyed, the impact they have on interpersonal relationships, and the organisational environment that carries and reinforces them. The aesthetic critique, broadly conceived, includes an investigation of organisational power and politics, the moral boundaries or limits that can be established or exceeded, and promises a rich approach for comparative governmental studies examined in the context of cultural traditions. These dimensions affect role and identity construction, organisational design, the policy process, and processes of institutionalisation. While representing a significant departure from conventional studies in the field, aesthetics reflects a continuity of thought on the creation, use and abuse of authority from the writings of Plato through to contemporary theory.

Papers on public administration, or on politics that have direct implications for public administration, will be considered for publication in the *Halduskultuur* Special Issue. All papers will be considered for a monograph publication proposal in 2007.

The deadline for submissions for the conference is 15 January 2006, and for the *Halduskultuur* Special Issue 15 July 2006. Submission for the conference should include an abstract of 300-500 words, mailing contact information and email address. Submissions for the Special Issue will be an electronic copy of the paper with mailing and email contact information.

Interested contributors should contact the issue editor at the address below or visit the *Halduskultuur* website.

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