



**SWPS University**  
**Warsaw**

**Institute of Philosophy**  
**University of Wrocław**

**Cassirer Center**  
**University of Wrocław**

## **Culture – Image – Power**

# **Power and the Image: Its Uses and Abuses**

**International Conference, SWPS University, Warsaw**

**September 1-5, 2025**

The interplay between visual and verbal codes has long captured our attention, shaping human orientation and influence on the environment. This conference seeks to delve into the profound role of images in our "culture of images" (J.-J. Wunenburger), examining their capacity to convey and encode information across sensory modalities. From tactile and auditory landscapes to visual media, images surround and shape us, mediating our experiences and perceptions.

Images often appear as self-evident representations of reality, affirming or visualizing states of the world. Yet, they can also deceive, manipulate, and obscure, raising critical questions about their power and potential misuse. The critique of images has been a recurrent theme throughout global history, and in today's world, images continue to construct entire symbolic frameworks—delineating boundaries like "us" versus "them"—and influencing our actions and identities.

This conference invites scholars, artists, and practitioners to investigate how images interact with power, consciousness, and culture. What do contemporary research and creative practices reveal about the pervasive influence of visibility? How do images contribute to memory, imagination, and action? What role do images play in ideologization and liberation?

### **Conference Structure**

- **Dates:** September 1–5, 2025
- **Daily Themes:** Each of the themes listed below will serve as the focus for one day of the conference.

1. **The Culture of Images in Contemporary Society**

Our contemporary culture as a "culture of images"; the role of images and symbols in online and social communication; the omnipresence of visuality in "visual landscapes" - interdisciplinary discourses and image research.

2. **The History and Philosophy of the Image**

History of research into the concept of an image; critiques and apologies of images; definitions, methods, approaches; philosophical sources of contemporary research on images; art history - the history of image forms and new questions - digital images; visibility and invisibility in the image.

3. **The Ontology and Temporality of the Image**

The ontology of images; the icon; sequentiality, temporality of the image; "what", "when" and "how" is an image?; images in science - documentation, spatial thinking; schemas, patterns, symbols; thinking and images.

4. **Images and Power**

Images and power; psychology of imaging, psychology of "images"; images in political and social space; genealogy of "us"-"them" images; images of power, mobilizing, unifying images, images of rebellion; utopia and utopianization; image as a tool of social change;

5. **Literature (De)Constructions of Images**

How literature constructs or deconstructs images of power, including text-image interplay, the persistence of clichés, and the role of imagery in modern storytelling.

- **Graduate Sessions:** Each day will include a special session for graduate student presentations. If you are a graduate student interested in being considered for one of these spots please notify us in your abstract submission.
- **Submission Deadline:** Abstracts (250–500 words + citations) are due by **May 1, 2025**.

**Submission Guidelines**

Abstracts should be 250–500 words (excluding citations) and clearly articulate the proposed topic and relevance to one or more conference themes. Please include name(s), affiliations and contact email address. Submissions are due by **May 1, 2025**.

For inquiries and submissions, please contact Dr. Eli Kramer at [eliorkramer@gmail.com](mailto:eliorkramer@gmail.com).