Incitatus
Symposium

On Political Humor

applied philosophical comedy

Lisbon, 29 June, 2020

Bordalo Pinheiro Museum
The symposium **INCITATUS 2020** aims to provide an open space for reflection on humor and politics. The title of the conference opens space to question the primary logic of the political phenomenon as the relationship between rulers and ruled, power and obedience, or authority and submission. From corruption to bad business, from abuse of power to the caricature of hypocrisy and social mediocrity, the realm of appearances in the political game has never gone untouched under the acute inspection of humor. Many even believe that the health of a political regime can be measured by the barometer of tolerance for laughter, or, consequently, of freedom itself. Thus, the **INCITATUS 2020 Symposium** recalls that old story of Emperor Caligula who made, or intended to make, his favorite horse a roman consul. It does not matter here whether the story is true or not. The power of myths and magical thinking goes beyond fact checking. The image has an almost absolute power as a shadow. The game inside the political arena of struggle for power often forces dissimulated, devious, and sometimes humiliating strategies. This power has ancient roots from Greek culture to the Roman Empire, and is thrown precisely on the razor’s edge between the strength of the ruling power and the weakness of its exposure. Humor displays its potency precisely in this small gap, in the affirmation of freedom, laughing in a more old or modern style, more refined or crude, but its formal, transcendental and speculative logic remains the same. In political theater, in this eternal game of light and shadow, humor as a weapon of defense and attack arises to amuse, distract, or to tell simply the truth that no one else dares. The tripartite of the political-theatrical problem is permanent and stable in its playing: the actors, the public, the critics. In all this, laughter and politics join hands in the celebration of spectacle, feast, anarchy and subversion. In this case, during the **INCITATUS 2020**, humor and politics will take the stage for just one day. On the 29th of June 2020 the seminar on Humor and Politics will welcome all authors from any field, theoretical or pragmatic approach, and may cover any time or period. We encourage paper presentations focused on the intersections between humor and politics, including, but not limited to:

- Humor under authoritarian governments
- Humor as a tool used by politicians
- Cartoons and memes
- Humor, elections and campaigns
- Humor and democracy
- Humor and the internet
- Humor and media (satire in cinema, TV, radio, newspapers etc)
- Irony and politics: basic survival kit for democracy
- Humor and political discourse
- Humor politics and social sciences (sociology, psychology, history etc)
- Politics and ridicule
- Political-legal paradoxes: freedom vs limits
- Dark humor, scorn and mockery
- Humor taboo
- Humor and anthropology (particular or singular events of political humor)
- Political humor and authors, or particular publications (such as Bordalo Pinheiro, Crumb, Laerte, Canard Enchaîné, NY Times, Fanzines etc)

**Confirmed Keynote Speaker:**

Don Waisanen, Baruch College, CUNY

[https://donwaisanen.com/](https://donwaisanen.com/)

**Confirmed special invited speakers:**

Domingo Hernández Sánchez, University of Salamanca

[https://usal.academia.edu/DomingoHern%C3%A1ndezS%C3%A1nchez](https://usal.academia.edu/DomingoHern%C3%A1ndezS%C3%A1nchez)

Isabel Ermida, Universidade do Minho

[http://cehum.ilch.uminho.pt/researchers/72](http://cehum.ilch.uminho.pt/researchers/72)
Abstracts, in Portuguese or English, must be sent to the following email addresses: constantinomar@gmail.com or joao.capelotti@gmail.com. They must not exceed 500 words and must be followed by a small biographical note (up to 100 words). Presentations, in Portuguese or English, will be 20 minutes long. Conference proceedings will be published in e-book format only in English. Participation and attendance is free. More information about the conference and the submission of proposals can be found at this address: http://www.uc.pt/fluc/uidief.

**Important Dates:**

*Submission: until 1 April 2019*

*Notification of the decision: 1 May 2019*

**Organization:**

Constantino Pereira Martins

FCSH-NOVA University of Lisbon / IEF - University of Coimbra

http://www.uc.pt/fluc/uidief/members/CPM

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**Partnership:**

Bordalo Pinheiro Museum
Incitatus symposium

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CONFERENCE

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Bordalo Pinheiro Museum

https://museubordalopinheiro.pt/en/

Location: Campo Grande, 382, Lisboa