

COMEDY FOR DINNER and other dishes



Edited by Constantino Pereira Martins



2019

Page intentionally left in blank

Título: Comedy for dinner – and other dishes
Coordenador: Constantino Pereira Martins
© dos autores das respectivas comunicações
Colecção: eQVODLIBET 4
1ª edição: março de 2019
ISBN: 978-989-54328-1-3



*What if everything in the world
were a misunderstanding; what if laughter really were weeping!*

(...)

As a special dispensation, I was granted the favor of making a wish. "What do you want," asked Mercury. "Do you want youth, or beauty, or power, or a long life, or the most beautiful girl, or anyone of the other glorious things we have in the treasure chest? Choose-but only one thing." For a moment I was bewildered; then I addressed the gods, saying: My esteemed contemporaries, I choose one thing-that I may always have the laughter on my side. Not one of the gods said a word; instead, all of them began to laugh. From that I concluded that my wish was granted and decided that the gods knew how to express themselves with good taste, for it would indeed have been inappropriate to reply solemnly: It is granted to you.

Kierkegaard, Diapsalmata¹

1 (Ed.) Howard & Edna Hong, Kierkegaard, *Diapsalmata, Either/or*, Princeton University Press, 1987.

*To the shining laughter of my son Guilherme
combined complicity
of loud radiant symphony
that bravely defies
the hard rule of time and space.*

*May God always favor
laughter on your side.*

Contents

Acknowledgements ix

Foreword x-xix

1. *Carl Jung and the Role of Shadow and Trickster in Political Humor: Social Philosophical Analysis*, Jarno Hietalahti 20-41

This chapter analyzes the relationship between humor and power in the light of court jesters (comedians) and sovereign (president) based on C.G. Jung's theory of archetypes, and especially on the concepts of the 'shadow' and the 'trickster'. The focus is on the role of the invited comedienne Michelle Wolf, and the current president Donald J. Trump. The author argues how the trickster and the shadow are present on a socially unconscious level, and how they offer a symbolic explanation for the current political situation in the Western world. The chapter opens up the need for ridiculing Trump, and its possibly problematic aspects.

2. *Post-Gender Comedy at the White House Correspondents' Dinner*, Outi Hakola .. 42-61

Michelle Wolf's comedy performance at the White House Correspondents' Dinner (2018) received mixed responses from the audience. Heated debate over whether she was too mean in her roast brought forward several gender-related notions. Wolf's performance challenged the cultural assumptions that political comedy is a male space because of its aggressive style. This challenge brings along the possibility of post-gender comedy. By analyzing the gendered aspects of Wolf's performance and the audience's responses to it, I explore the possibilities and limitations of post-gender comedy as a concept and as a practice. I suggest that post-gender comedy should not be defined in relation to sex/gender categories, but in relation to cultural practices in which gender hierarchies are deconstructed.

3. *What we Talk About when we Talk About Humor. An Extensive Approach to the Phenomenon of Political Humor*, Cristian Palacios 62-73

In this work we propose an extensive and interdisciplinary approach to the phenomenon of humor, comic and laughter from the field of Discourse Analysis and Social Semiotics. We consider not only verbal humor but also another semiotics modes, that is, physical, visual, gestural, theatrical and audiovisual humor and not only the point of view of the production of humor, but also the

mechanisms of its recognition. According to our point of view it is impossible to deeply understand the political significance of humoristic discourses without understand the differences between what we call humor and it's opposite, the comical; both modes of what we have denominate the laughable, that is, the propriety of some discourses of being differentiated to the ones considered serious in a given society. In contrast to the comical, the humoristic subject presents itself as someone whose intentions we don't really know, someone unapproachable, hard to pin down. While the comical founds the universe of representations that we use to build the reality; the humoristic, on the other hand, dismantles it, given that, recognizing the adversity of the world that surrounds us, it prevails over the circumstances through ingenuity. Or, for the opposite, through a funny remark free from pathos, it marks everything that in the universe of men can be perceived as a trauma: the death, the absurd of reality, reality itself, the real. If comical can be used as a political instrument, in order to fight against dominant discourse or, on the other hand, in order to preserve pre-existing conditions, humor can't be used in either meanings, and that is its real political implication.

4. *The place of political humor in Turkish political culture*, Hüseyin ÇAVUŞOĞLU, Özcan SEZER, Tuğçe BAYRAM 74-94

The aim of the work is to reveal the place of political humor in the Turkish political culture during the Democratic Party's rule (1950-1960). In this context, first of all, the concept of humor, humor theories (Superiority theory, Conflict theory, Relaxation theory) were examined in detail and then the development of the Democratic Party period was examined as a period of rise, pause and collapse. In the last part, the understanding of political humor in DP period was given in detail. It is possible to encounter humor in every period of Turkish political life. By understanding the development of humor, the power of criticism and the domain of influence created by this force, the influence of humor on politics is understandable.

5. *Humor in young democracy: functions and applications*, Jolita Horbaauskienė, Ramunė Kasperavičienė 95-106

Humour may be used for gaining, protecting or sharing power. It may also be employed as a means to attack, undermine or criticise adversaries or ideas. In political discourse especially, humour may be considered as an ambiguous and clear-cut concept. The study seeks to explore the instances of usage and goals of humour in political discourse in a country with no long and deep democratic political traditions. Theories of humour and superiority serve as a basis for theoretical framework as well as ground the interpretation of empirical data, which is collected through content analysis. The

results of the study may be beneficial for politicians, their public relations representatives and general public.

6. *No Laughing Matter: Political Cartoonists Take on the #MeToo Movement*, Leigh Nanne Hersey, Claire Vidrine 107-119

Political cartoons have been a much used way to express opinion in the United States since before the country was created. These images have a unique way of exaggerating and simplifying an issue at the same time. This chapter explores how political cartoonists depict the early stages of #MeToo movement. The #MeToo movement was reignited in October 2017 as more and more women began to share their stories of sexual harassment. The research analyzes 82 political cartoons published between October 2017 and January 2018 on the topic. Common themes were identified, such as the political partisanship in the reactions to the accusations. Several literary and cultural allusions were noted, such as the imagery of pigs in the cartoons. The social construction of those portrayed in cartoons was also developed, showing deep differences in the power structure of the women and the accused. This research adds to the literature by demonstrating how the use of political cartoons can bring focus to an important societal issue.

7. *Bio-academics of the authors* 120-129

Acknowledgments

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Nuno Ferro. Words are weak to define the trust and freedom Professor Ferro has placed in me. But also the admiration I feel for his work and study. He is the most brilliant mind I have ever met and its been almost 30 years witnessing his intelligence as a musical storm and his discourse as an embrace. His passion for thinking is still today an inspiration for many of us and an impossible challenge to fit in his shoes. Without him and his continuing support none of this would have been possible.

I am deeply grateful to Professor Jessica Milner Davis. For her inspiring support and rare, quickly vanishing, example of scholar, friend, elegance and intelligence. She is truly a global treasure.

Also a very special note of appreciation to João Paulo Capelotti who reviewed the texts with precious suggestions that made the book better. It has been a pleasure and an honor to re-build the Atlantic bridge with him.

Last but not the least, Professor Mário Santiago de Carvalho, Director of the *IEF* in Coimbra University, for the support and making possible that the book could exist in an open access form.

This book would not have been possible without the financial support of the *FCT* Foundation regarding my study and time.

FOREWORD

1. Political humor: the roast factor

This study aims to think about the relation between laughter and politics. In the midst of this love-hate battle, we all understand Humor as a complex subject with various derivations that inhabits the present moment in a gracious state. From movies to television, from Arts to Politics, being funny and having a sense of humor are a key factor to understand the historical momentum. Addressing specifically the event *White House Correspondents' Dinner* we aim to explore the phenomenological and political implications of this exemplary case-study. This means trying to understand the importance of having politicians laughing at themselves, among them and at each other, by them and by others. This *sui generis* event, anchored in both and simultaneous offense and defense rhetorical strategies, is undoubtedly one of the most incongruous and relevant events in the political order worldwide. We hope to highlight that singularity in this special cooking of comedy in the heart of the American political process. We also offer other political side dishes. The book was meant to be a collection of academic essays that would cover different areas and forms of access to the topic, in the attempt of showing the complexity of a phenomenon that has massive political implications and can uncover and reveal one of the oldest relations in politics: humor and power. So, it is that tensional relation that becomes the background of this study collection, which operates as a pretext and provocation.

The *White House Correspondents' Dinner* was a sort of *focus imaginarius* where every text would converge. Since we could not build a full book just with this topic of study, we replace that univocity with a multidisciplinary approach and therefore a multiplicity of texts and reflections on diverse political settings where humor is played and degusted.

2 . Dinner for fools: Comedy is served

The idea was to build a research between drama and comedy, democracy and aesthetics, politics and image, all condensed and departing or arriving at the *White House Correspondents' Dinner*. Thinking about it in terms of humor, but also if it would be possible to address the *WHCD* as an exemplar symbol of a supposed democratic aesthetics?

Since we can have some difficulty in building a theoretical model linking² dictatorship with laughter, we must assume that humor is somehow an expression of freedom³. So, what is so funny? In a nutshell: entertainment. Humor, media and power inhabit this logic of entertainment in *Scheherazade* one thousand nights. Like a *Pinocchio* park and recreational *soft power* strategy, the grasping of entertainment as the possibility of an unconscious oppressor model is still today a hypothesis to verify and the promise of a surveillance and control society is still in formation with variables too complex to be approached here. The specific form of the *WHCD* is designed like a roast. Historically and theoretically its connection to the idea of fool, jester or feast of fools has ancient roots in philosophical anthropology. At dinner there is an exercise of transparency as in Andersen's tale where the king goes naked. It is a double exercise or a test: a) to the subject focused and his reactions and b) to the guest and their reactions. So it is truly a collective performance. There can be a roastmaster. The roasted can be one or several. So the risk-reward system is double edged: you can bomb in any category or show great spirit also. There is only one rule: you just can get up and storm out saying: *I am mad as hell and I am not going to take this anymore*. It is an endurance exercise too. But the essence of that relation between politics and humor is rooted in Bakhtin.

It is a symbiosis of freedom of expression and subversion. The illusion of power against power, *bellum omnium contra omnes*, Hobbes' war of all against all, inversion of order under the rule of laughter. There is a long⁴ tradition of television shows that use comedy in U.S. history. The *WHCD* is a double event: factual dinner and television show. This is the best, or was, political sitcom with only one episode. We must not forget that beyond a dinner, this event was *per se* a true political event. We could draw a vast and clever portrait of all the sociological, political and historical implications of humor in the U.S., but the specificity of the *WHCD* is the thin line between irresponsibility and performativity. There is a certain lightness in this event. *Only in America* some might think. Maybe that is true and it most probably is. There is a mix of emotions, from comedy to tragedy, in this special night. A true interwoven theater. It would also be interesting to study the *WHCD* from its

2 To the best of my knowledge we are still waiting to that form of the political phenomenon to arrive. A dictator that would build the foundations for his power from pure comedy and laughter.

3 Naturally that this is a controversial matter that we will not have the time to explore. There were also comic forms in dictatorships but they never flourished.

4 From Archie Bunker to Larry David, Seinfeld, Cheers, Simpsons, Family Guy, Cosby, Prince of Bel-Air, Saturday Night Live, Daily Show, the list goes on and on. Anchors, actors, directors, writers, producers, etc. Infinite listing of heterogeneity.

archives. An archeological⁵ perspective that could research⁶ the White House speechwriters, Presidents' performances, and relevant people involved in the happening in a comparative methodology. A new area of studies could emerge from this virtuous and singular event, one we could draw as *Laughter in political strategy*⁷. Humor has a therapeutic quality that is rooted in an ancient exorcism of dark evil things. In politics the same applies: the dinner is an exercise in health and democratic quality. A public fictional performance in civil disobedience.

Laughter is a sharp weapon in the political debate, but humor is also a powerful formula for crisis management in the political control damage⁸. Laughter exhibits a particular image, a sign of well being, happiness and self-confidence. Laughter is an expression of strength. There is an old saying in Portuguese “*a brincar se dizem as verdades*”. Maybe there is a grain of truth in every joke, or for some people the way of joking is to tell the truth. *It is funny because it is true*, A sort of derivation from *parrhesia*. Perhaps the *parrhesia laughter* is related to truces and truth. Because in politics those two factors are of a strategic difficulty. There is certainly an affective power in effective humor. Everything added up, it could be resumed to the following formula: since the revolutionary discovery of the concept of *social capital*⁹, humor has become a powerful tool of communication in the late 1990's and beginning of the 21st century . Much more powerful than it ever was in the political and social history. The massive impact, creating the buzz, going viral, social network, rule of the masses. Massive media, massive industry, massive culture, massive everything. It is an optical illusion. The historical massive period is simultaneous the *Belle Époque* of isolation. In the historical time of solitude there is a dead end. But it has the limpid advantage of revealing that the whole history of mankind is a struggle against loneliness.

5 The 2019 edition will have Ron Chernow. So maybe there will be an historic twist and flavor.

6 How to delimit the historical period? How to build an academic archive? What kind of archive? Audiovisual, written, or both? There is also a potential of partnerships to be built towards the White House itself, the White House Correspondents' Dinner archives, network archives, articles, which could allow scholars to more historical insights and even towards the methodology and dating, for example: pre and post 9/11, timelines, etc. There is a similar wonderful project in Paris that could be of great interest.

7 Cf: Pereira Martins, C., *O papel do Humor na argumentação política*, *Revista Portuguesa Ciência Política*, número 5, 2015 , In https://www.academia.edu/19778430/The_role_of_Humor_in_political_argumentation.

8 In politics actions are vital but reactions are critical. For example we could remember a period when some activists always used the *pie in the face trick* against different targets related to power. We could see at that time the different personalities by the way they reacted to this sort of personal assault. We could see forms of reactions according to the lightness of laughter and others towards the gravity of the offense. Humor is one of the key factors when managing a crisis. And the sense of humor is a reliable form of character evaluation.

9 The importance and vastness of the concept is obviously impossible to trace here. We will try in the future to show the relationship between laughter and social capital regarding politics and beyond.

3. Comedy is served: the political T-Bone

Addressing specifically to our historic moment, we are now living under the trilogy of the Trump era soap opera: fire, fury and furor. The political *telenovela* is a specific comedy style, from art form to political performativity. This creates the double illusion: that Trump does not use comedy, and more radically, that the repulse of Trump for comedy, sketches and other forms, is not also a use of the comedic power. Not playing the humor game, or refusing it in certain scenarios, does not mean that you are out of a humorous strategy. That continues to be a major mistake regarding the Trump political opposition. The continuing treatment of Trump as a fool is a major contribution to his success. In fact, Trump is the biggest advertisement satiric genius of the late 20th century and beginning of the 21st. His geniality created a collective humor game that mixes character comedy, anti-humor, deadpan comedy, improvisational and insult comedy with shock humor and stand-up. Building a brand, a name, a signature. Like an artist that a certain point sells everything just by using his name. *Mutatis mutandis*, he is a political super star. A global entertainer. A winner that mixes famous and infamous in the same familiar setting. He has that star quality gangsters used to have. A sort of fascination around what is forbidden. Someone smart could make great use of that aura. *Video meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor*. There is something fascinating about the enemy within, that dark passenger that is also part of us. The sex appeal of money. The mix of vanity and greed makes Trump a symbol. And that attracts a particular kind of people. *Nihil novi sub sole*. Besides those important factors there is also a global shift regarding tolerance and compassion, at the same time the real political form is also expanding borders to a new frontier. Politics of deception and delusion, desert of ideas, the abyss could be something you approach or something that you build. But maybe the pessimistic perspective is insufficient. We should only look at the bright side. It probably is just a politics of hoax, a sham with a twist of laughter and games. Cheating and affection. The 2016 campaign for the U.S. Presidency revealed, and confirmed, the new turn that the role of emotions play in the present political landscape across the globe. The big happening was not so much the relation between emotions and politics but mostly the scale and overwhelming strategic use of negative emotions in the political debate. In general, the role of emotions emerges in politics as an expression and result of the combat in the political process. The question of empathy and adhesion to a certain political perspective were always present in rhetorical reflections while mobilization of passions. Understanding

emotions as underlying the rationality process, involves cognitive and strategic consequences and, to the limit, their influence in decision-making. Politics always operated in this ambivalence (reason-emotion) and political campaign strategists are particularly concerned with the timing where these operators must be more efficiently communicated. This has been a well known recipe used in mild doses and with the focus on a balanced performance. The political campaign for the U.S. Presidency in 2016 seems to follow this general rule but also introduces a particular novelty: the extensive use of negativity in the debate. In the impossibility of covering all the contours of the problem at hand we will focus on the Trump campaign, since it was one of transgression, that made use of aggressive tactics regarding common sense ideas, political correctness and taboo issues. Regarding Trump's campaign as one of management of the provocateur factor through the embodiment of the *enfant terrible* persona, we will try to present the two main emotional ingredients that supported a campaign established in an efficient use of timing, media and boredom. The first emotion in analysis will be fear. This implies exploiting one of the most powerful tools in the political emotion pallet. The main derivatives could be aggression, violence, hate and resentment. The second emotion in focus will be contempt. This means the discussion of *ad hominem* attacks and the power of humor through scorn and mockery. Is the affective power also anchored in effective humor or is it effective power also guided by affective humor? But why is subversive humor so close to Philosophy? Because it implies a phenomenological strategy of distance and puts in suspension the natural and habitual understanding of life. Just as philosophy is part of an interruption. In that sense it subverts because it does not collaborate with the habitual becoming of things in general. This process is similar to the politico-emotional territory regarding its functional value as a strategic possibility of playing with the mechanisms and devices of laughter. The role of humor in rhetoric in relation to the understanding of the connection between power and subversion (or interruption) reminds us of the jester figure in old monarchic times where the fool or the clown¹⁰ points out to this long tradition of irruption of the absurd or the indication of a specific or generic perplexity. The children that points to the naked king is already a laughing finger¹¹. But not only to the king, of course. The argument that I would like to propose here is that Mr. Trump, now President Trump, is the incarnation of that historic

10 Cf: Kasper, K., *O jogo dos Clowns*, Revista Nada n 17, 2013; Král, P., *Le Burlesque*, Éditions Ramsay, of California Press; Moore, M.P., "The Quayle Quagmire": *Political Campaigns in the Poetic Form of Burlesque*, Western Journal of Communication, 56 (Spring 1992), 108-124.

11 Cf. Smith, C., Noth, B., *The Role of Humor in Political Argument: How 'stratergy' and 'lockboxes' Changed a Political Campaign*, 2002.

figure, making the absurd realization, being elected, *i.e.*, the anti-king that takes power, the anti-king-king. This sort of stand up and subversive humor of the *enfant terrible* against the political-correctness means a victory based on making full use of Schopenhauer's¹² argumentative theory on always being right, and the contemporary manifestation of Machiavelli's Prince. Understanding the anatomy of the "real world"¹³ means to understand the ways of getting into power by words and votes in modern democracies, revealing the versatility of the political actor in the U.S. elections, where the Trump campaign showed and exemplified the risks of populism and the dangers of transforming a political campaign into a circus. The gap between promise and delivery demonstrates the paradoxes and inexplicit thought about the "bs factor", revealing a desert of ideas that is to a degree determined by the tone (boring vs appealing), and the trend of treating politics as part of the entertainment business (*circus maximus*), as well as showing the fragility of the political-correctness line of action. In fact, Trump is not only the master of a mass media culture of scandals supported in a theory of shock¹⁴ and surprise, but also supported by an informal logic rooting the campaign by the old concepts of *psi war* and propaganda¹⁵. In the impossibility of constituting a political epistemology, the analysis of political rhetoric with emotions-based discourse appears as an open field of research that is now growing in some Universities and in some media platforms. The main questions that are in place involving politics, rhetoric and emotion or humor, could be summarized in the a) *decision-making and motivation*¹⁶ and the b) *processes of cognition and perception* (regarding judgments and social constructions)¹⁷. So, if we had to be very synthetic about drawing a preliminary equation it would be: Emotion-cognition-perception-action. We will get back to this later. Putting this conceptual structure into context, we could say that Mr. Trump had the fortunate coincidence of running for President in a time frame that could be addressed as *Affective*

12 A practical philosophical exercise, and our main theoretical foundation for understanding the rhetorical battleground of the 2016 US Presidency campaign, would be to review the candidate Trump campaign according to the Schopenhaurian premises on the art of insult, controversy and always being right. Cf. Schopenhauer, A. , *The art of controversy, the art of insult, the art of always being right*.

13 Regarding the Machiavelian perspective and old dilemma: do the ends justify the means? Cruelty or just common sense?

14 This relates to the political correctness and the discredit of contemporary democracies. A shock theory means a continuous state of provocation and pushing the boundaries. Playing with the limits there is subtle and shocking art of manipulation that could paradoxically be totally exposed. This is particularly true regarding the relationship between politics and media.

15 The new political marketing and communication strategies makes full use of big data and other conceptual tools that changed the rules of the game towards cyberpolitics. Among others, the ridiculous exemplary notion of post-truth.

16 A subsumed relation regarding the role of emotions in decisions and choices, in the passage from emotion to action. Cf: Solomon, R. (Ed.), *What is an emotion?*, Oxford University Press, 2003.

17 The power of ideas association, overlapping concepts and images, planting and growing thoughts in the back of your head. Cf: *Inception*, 2010, Dir: Christopher Nolan.

*Capitalism*¹⁸. Meaning that he had a long term plan in a short time living philosophy where everything is ephemeral, he slowly built his own social capital¹⁹, joining memory and familiarity, proximity and recognition. Affective Capitalism in Politics means for the running candidate a radical jump from being an apprentice²⁰ to the master of manipulation. Trump's affective-effective politics of collective emotionality brings into light the formidable spiral of the present times: the boredom²¹ within the boredom is a vomit, nausea, vertigo. No way out. What does boredom pushes us collectively, as a society, as a civilization, to? The emptiness of boredom demands entertainment. From media (maximus) circus to the political arena, the jester wannabe king, the ultimate joker, uses all his social capital to transform the TV screen familiarity (habit and ritual) into political credibility. An old trick and strategy, well known in media oriented societies, that can sometimes defy logic and reason and certainly goes in the opposite way of Rawls principle of reasonability²² and reinforces our hermeneutic hypothesis of the negative up rise in the political emotion process. With the emotional appeal also comes the construction of the political image²³ that brings out the unfathomable question of charisma, a clear example of affection and the play of dispositions and emotions in the personalization process of politics²⁴. Of course that in Mr. Trump's case, the question of egocentrism and narcissism²⁵ reached unprecedented levels in the democratic contemporary world accompanied by the illusion and mirage of confusing a strong man with an aggressive man in his offensive strategy. The magical thought that presides over the rhetoric of this political illusionist²⁶ brings with it uncertainty and unpredictability and, in this sense, is on one hand a huge risk and, on the other, an antidote to boredom, this profound cancer of the societies of the 21st century. The Trump rhetoric is

18 In the impossibility of expanding the concept confront the work of Bernard Stiegler.

19 In the impossibility of expanding the concept confront: The Apprentice- D. Trump; Guy Debord- [Homo Spectator - Marie-José Mondzain](#).

20 The celebrity apprentice, mastering the art of the deal, manipulates the media circus like a Nerus fire, reminding Nietzsche on stage in a stand up night: laughing like a hammer. The iconoclasm and the status of images is a task for others to think. He is the center of attention.

21 Tedium and boredom as the great epidemic outbreak of the 21st Century.

22 Cf. Reasonable doubt principle, reasonableness. Rawls, J. , *Political liberalism*, p. 48, Columbia University Press, 1995.

23 Personal image and the image that is contained in concepts and ideas. In the expression of ideas maybe it could be interesting to think about a politics of expression.

24 Ben-Ze'ev, A., *The Subtlety of Emotions*, Ed. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2000; Manstead, A. ,Frijda, N., Fischer ((Ed.), A., *Feelings and Emotions*, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

25 In the impossibility of expanding the concept , we must note that are differences regarding the degree and types of narcissism. Maybe political Psychology could expand more on the peacock syndrome on a losers and winners closed logic.

26 In the most pragmatic approach to Politics what does Democracy means? Managing the momentum of voting.

the political business show in its purest form. Or in the words of Mel Brooks: “*It’s good to be the king*”. Skipping a deeper psychoanalytic analysis of the relation between Narcissus and the mirror²⁷, we could say that the humor-one-man-show in question here is a cold humor, or a sort of cold humorist that does not realize the amplitude of his humor or simply pretends seriousness to reinforce his comedy. It is not really sarcasm, or plain irony, maybe a sort of dry humor that mixes terror with greed. We could say that the perfect symbolic image for this sort of parody is *Bill 'The Butcher'* from Scorsese film “*Gangs of New York*”. In a certain sense, the whole film sort of anticipates the general peacock character features and the whole presidential debate in the sequence where the Irish immigrants are arriving by boat²⁸. Maybe this coldness is related to one of the main processes that is crucial in the political game: fear. But fear itself has many faces. It could mean fear of oneself, of others, of things, of happenings, basic or complex fears. Fear of the ridicule. Everyone of us knows that one. There a special category named Gelatophobia. Power does not like loose laughter. In fact, nothing more natural: the nature of power is to control the side effects of laughter, and humor is by nature the bite in the heel of power. The old Aesop tale of the frog and scorpion. *Panem et circenses*. Fascination demands a certain apathy. Would that explain the end of the presidential presence at the dinner party? Some possible answers, in the impossibility of answering them all: the fear of ridicule, he does not have a sense of humor, etc, the most reasonable one would be to admit that the President knows that if he enters the game he has to play, and he prefers to play on other boards. And in fact, the question poses itself retrospectively: why should a President expose himself to such an exercise in humor and laughter, with possible extensive image damage? The only possible answer is this: exposing the fragility of the US President is an exercise in humility and transparency, back to basics and reality check, in short, a mental health exercise. This humorous checkup also shows to the world, *urbi et orbi*, that there is something simple that prevents, *in extremis*, the self-confidence of the political power without rules: the humor like weapon is accessible to all. Rich and poor. Rulers and ruled. Bottom line, we are all the same boat, sharing the same fate in this round blue vessel in the cosmic and solar carousel. But never underestimate *Primus Potus Clown Cum laude (In toto). Vox populi: Sic parvis magna*. The status quo is now in the hands of a *dito-astrum-audax, eripio laetitia lubricus lucrum ludius, magnus maior maximus in otium apud ovis*. Jokes apart, this innocuous and

27 In the impossibility of expanding the concept, we would suggest the reading of Umberto Eco on mirrors, and all the narcissistic derivations of the concept and types of narcissists.

28 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jcvpEOl9ug>; *Gangs of New York*, 2002, Dir. Martin Scorsese.

mellifluous has a *raison d'être*: behind the injudicious and hogwash political marketing, that brings about such wave of stupefaction all over the media, he is a pompous and rambunctious fellow that likes to fight the political arena like a business man, selling ideas and gaining benefits. *There is no such thing as bad publicity.* The Wolf of Pennsylvania Avenue. “*Fugazi, fogazi. It’s a wazi, it’s a woozi. It’s...fairy dust (...) Keep the client on the Ferris Wheel, and it goes, the park is open twenty-four-seven, three-six-five. Every decade, every Goddamn century. That’s it.*”²⁹. He knows the people. Their ambitions and inner feelings. The virtuosity of the discombobulated dinner laughter debauchery is the possibility of exposing a weak side of a President. And the current one likes to appear tough. Looking tough, walking tough, handshaking tough, negotiating tough. But there is a big difference between toughness and courage. It is not enough to look badass. In the space or time where tough meets brave you look just stiff and rough. But the lollygag and pauciloquent performance contains a political cacophony paradox: how can a politician be at the same time disgusting and appealing? The wabbit of the politically correctness sabotage in its iron guidelines, makes people look around for a vomitory. The malaise is globally wide spread. The perfunctory actions leave room and open space for tedium. The vitriol speech acts are all around. Hence, the present President. Humor is now in a dark³⁰ phase, a depression period in the image of Trump-absence-crash. The assumption of a dinner of this nature is that of total transparency, the funny strip teasing is also the scene of a hidden measure of forces, a kind of people vote, and a very extensive list of forces that are combined and crossed in a special event like this, that also has a before and a after. The President is not going, the last comedian was a disaster that exhibited the new greatest taboo of humor³¹, i.e., of the impossibility of something not being humor, or not being comic at all. If something is not funny the *diva complex* intervenes and someone will surely say that we do not notice the joke or that you just do not have a sense of humor. The P.C. is also in humor nowadays, and its great theory is: everything is permitted except not laughing. A very comfortable position indeed. And it is perfect: You can not bomb if you reach a certain level. Just keep doing the circuit and the bars and pray for TV primetime. In conclusion, the question is: will the *White House Correspondents' Dinner* stop having humor at dinner? Will the fools stop

29 In: <https://motivationmentalist.com/2018/12/04/wolf-of-wall-street-matthew-mcconaughey-scene/>.

30 Cf: Pereira Martins, C., *Trump: the negative uprising in Political Humor*, v. 1, n. 27 (2018): Estudos em Comunicação – Artigos; In: <http://doc.ubi.pt/ojs/index.php/index/search/authors/view?firstName=Constantino&middleName=Pereira&lastName=Martins&affiliation=FCSH%20-%20UNL%2C%20IEF%20-UC&country=PT>.

31 The diva complex in humor. Similar to superiority complex.

showing up? If contemporary democrat politics could not conceal its intrinsic monarchist matrix, will this be the great victory of the republic as court guillotine and palace staging? The great white palace in Washington is a beacon of light for the world. Let's hope it does not become a dark castle surrounded by high walls. We would all be poorer. Because laughter loves those cozy warm spots where fools rule, semi-stupid or beautiful idiots reign, and moron are addicted watching the unfolding. *On-the-line or in-the-life*. There is a big pallet of flavors and subdirectories about the universal stupidity that is now taking over the world. Unstoppable machine. And there is a subtle pleasure in it. This is the usual time and place where the conclusion of a text goes to the summary and appreciation of the contributions and special words to the authors articles. The authors already know that accomplishing this collective work was not easy and it was a really long and bumpy road. So, the usual format is not going to be done here. First, because it is a hassle, and second, if we all continue to follow the international standards of a boring, uncreative university model, we are certainly contributing to its end as we know it. This inelegant outcome for the University's place is already underway as it has passed from place of wisdom and debate, to knowledge, and now at the gates of entertainment. Thus, as I was referring to, in these introductions to a book it is up to the editor to contextualize and give a cross-sectional view of the texts and the book. I will not do any of this. Rather, I will give way to the ancient and natural primacy of the reader and of reading, in its anarchic puissance and freedom of the eyes. *Bon appétit*. Enjoy.

São Lourenço, March of 2019

Non erit vobis in Deum non erit vobis in gratia Dei

1. Carl Jung and the Role of Shadow and Trickster in Political Humor: Social Philosophical Analysis

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the author will analyze the relationship between humor and power in the light of court jesters (comedians) and sovereign (president). The chapter offers a philosophical perspective on the social significance of the White House Correspondents' Dinner. It will not discuss the detailed history of the Dinner. Instead, it will focus on the role of the invited comedienne Michelle Wolf, who performed at the Dinner in 2018. As regards the sovereign, special attention is given to the current president of the United States Donald J. Trump. The theoretical framework is based on C. G. Jung's theory of the archetypes, and especially on the concepts of the 'shadow' and the 'trickster'. The chapter is divided in four parts: First, the author will discuss Jung's theory of archetypes, and argue for its relevance in modern social philosophical thinking. Second, he explains how this theory can be used to analyze the Correspondents' Dinner and how it can shed light on those aspects of the occasion which are often left aside. Third, the author will argue how the trickster and the shadow are present on a socially unconscious level in these meetings, and how they offer a symbolic explanation for the current political situation in the Western world. It will be argued that Jung's theory opens new ways to interpret the relationship between power and humor. At the end, these threads are combined by discussing the need for ridiculing Trump.

BACKGROUND

The White House Correspondents' Dinner underlines the age-old idea that humor and power have always intertwined (e.g. Berger 1993). Traditionally, humor challenges the *status quo*: during medieval carnivals the world was turned upside down, and false kings took over temporarily (see Bakhtin 1984). The most obvious example of this kind of oppositional element is a court jester or fool, who can be considered an epitome of humor (Zijderveld 1982). He is the one who can criticize the sovereign through humor (Fromm 2010, 80). This fool is often described as a shadow of the king (e.g. Otto 2001). It will be argued that in the contemporary political scene, there is still demand for modern fools and sovereigns.

The court jester is a prominent symbol. It reminds that the current social situation is not irreversible. Fools challenge the common sense and rigid rationality, and offer a route to liberation from the everyday rules (Korhonen 1999). They promote the freedom of emotion and acting according to inner strivings without contemplation. C.G. Jung's theory of archetypes, and especially the concepts of shadow and trickster, offers a way to deepen this old theme. Drawing from Jung, it can be claimed that fools are in an internal relation to the prevailing order. The trickster offers a challenge to the shared rationality, but on a deeper level – behind all the superficial foolishness – this challenge is drawn from the totality of humanity. That is, it is a part of a broader humane wisdom. This idea suggests that fools and rulers are not opposing powers *per se*, but instead form a combination of different aspects of humanity.

Conceptually, humor is understood here as an umbrella concept which covers all different funny genres from farce to satire, and from slapstick to parody. The author follows the so-called incongruity theory which claims that humor is based on contradictions. Humor stems from clashes between cultural categorizations, or in other words, humor is triggered when something unexpected happens (see Morreall 1983; 2009). In humor, something goes wrong, so to speak. Of course, there is a wide discussion about the details of incongruity theory (see e.g. Hurley & al 2011, Oring 2016), but this chapter follows the general idea of the theory. Detailed analysis about nuances of the theory and comparisons to other forms of surprises (e.g. tragedy, horror, etc.) are left for other papers. Also, laughter here refers to laughter triggered by humor, and not, say, by tickling or toxins.

JUNG'S THEORY OF ARCHETYPES: THE SHADOW AND THE TRICKSTER

Psychoanalyst Carl Jung's theories are constantly questioned: he is often seen more a mystical than a scientific thinker. True, Jung's writings about self-contradictory and historically evolving God (2011), paranormal phenomena (1977), and alchemy as a root for psychological studies (with Jaffé 1965) are somewhat obscure, to say the least. Richard Noll (1997) calls Jung a cult leader and one of the biggest liars of the 20th century, who forged case studies to support his theories. However, if his writings are not taken literally but metaphorically, there are several valuable ideas in his collected works about the psychology of human beings and their collective behavior. If approached this way, his theory of archetypes is still valid. Here, the Jungian psychoanalysis, or analytical psychology like Jung himself calls his findings, is treated as a way to describe the plurality of human beings. The author does not defend psychoanalysis as a scientific theory but as an inspiring framework for critical social philosophy and social psychology. Jung's thinking helps to dive deeper into the individual and social psyche, and into the dynamics of humor in interpersonal relationships.

Jung worked with this theory of archetypes throughout his published works. An archetype is a striving which affects individual's consciousness and choices as well as, for instance, ethics. Archetypes are parts of the unconscious which conflict with the ego and conscious thinking. In short, they shape human behavior, and in this sense, an archetype refers to a pattern of behavior (Jung 1980, 5). There is no need to go through all the different archetypes, but nevertheless one should not think that there is, for example, a concrete Mother, Child or Old Man as such, but they refer to unconscious motivations which people have shared throughout eras. They are symbols of different aspects of humanity (for a detailed take on different archetypes, see Jung 1980). Jung's archetypal ideas can be considered as symbols (see Jung 1978b) which reveal the humanity in its totality. Archetypes need not to be 'real' in the natural-scientific sense, but instead they symbolize human motivations, desires and objectives. Different archetypes offer different perspectives on values and meanings shared by wide groups of people. Here, the two central archetypes which challenge the so-called normality of the social world will be discussed: the shadow and the trickster. As it will be shown, both are highly relevant for understanding the social significance of the White House Correspondents' Dinner. The shadow is, as the name

suggests, the neglected part of the personality which is nevertheless an alive and influential part of the unconscious:

The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance. (Jung 1978a, 145.)

Among humor researchers there are only a few scholars who discuss Jung's ideas. One of them is Lydia Amir, who sees Jungian depth psychology as a process of redemption of the personality. Amir points out that for Jung, it is essential to harness the opposites within a personality to become a whole. (Amir 2014, 269.) During this self-reflective process, it can be added, understanding humor in relation to the neglected sides of personality is pivotal. In short, analyzing the shadow deepens understanding of the social psychological aspects of humor and laughter. Following Jung, it could be suggested that people need to understand humor through the shadow which refers to the dual nature of human beings: human beings are rational, but there are repressed forces that are unknown to them. In short, when analyzing humor, researchers analyze the shadow, too.

It should be noted that the shadow is a social psychological concept because human beings estimate themselves in comparison to others. According to analytical psychology, ego-ideals are built on the foundation of shared social values. For this reason, the shadow is a dynamic concept, and its contents vary from time to time. For instance, if people value serious thinking and straightforward technological achievements, humor and creativity are parts of the shadow. Jung refers by the concept of the shadow to the negative side of the total personality, and those aspects persons wish to hide (Jung 1967). Interestingly, modern Jungians agree on that there is no direct access to the shadow, but it appears in daily lives, and

we meet it in humor – such as dirty jokes or slapstick antics – which express our hidden, inferior, or feared emotions. When we observe closely what strikes us as funny – such as someone slipping on a banana peel or referring to a

taboo body part – we discover that the shadow is active. (...) It's usually the shadow who laughs at jokes. (Zweig & Abrams 1991, xviii.)

An old idea is in play here: laughter reveals deeper attitudes. This notion is present also in Sigmund Freud's theory of humor (see Freud 1968a; 1968b), but it can be traced back to Plato's idea of how laughter expresses a mixture of joy and scorn (see Plato 2001). In the Jungian framework, the shadow (and humor) is a door to human individuality as social beings. In this setting, humor can express both high and low features of humanity. Confronting the shadow is necessary but also disturbing for an individual:

It is not until we have truly been shocked into seeing ourselves as we really are, instead of as we wish or hopefully assume we are, that we can take the first step toward individual reality. (Whitmont 1991, 16)

In many respects, Jung's position on humor comes close to Friedrich Nietzsche's idea about the Dionysian nature of laughter in comparison to the Apollonian position (see Douglas 2008, 27). Laughter expresses inner strivings and the darker side of humanity. For Nietzsche, this is golden laughter which questions the socially shared reality and tries to find a new basis for morality and humanity (see Nietzsche 2006), and one may very well add, a new basis for humor at the same moment. Following this Nietzschean tradition, humor operates as a looking-glass which offers a view on the clashes between irrationality and rationality, emotional strivings and rational self-control.

In this light, shocking humor may have a cathartic element because it exposes the inner self. Upsetting humor calls for self-reflection: on what is a reaction – be it laughter, disgust, or getting offended – to this type of humor based (see Hietalahti 2016)? The author suggests this is the main principle on which roasts at the Correspondents' Dinner are based. Humor, even in a disturbing form, is seen as a good thing for individuals and a society because it handles taboos and sensitive topics.

One must agree that Jung's and Jungians' conceptualization of humor is somewhat limited, but the basic idea is intriguing. Humor, although often neglected in the name of reason and science, is an essential part of humanity. Even if humor does not always make sense *per se*, it is possible to understand this painfully human feature. However, it should be noted that

not all humor is part of the shadow. The Jungian view on humor and laughter must admit that the shadow is present on the type of laughter which expresses negative aspects of humanity. Simply put, the shadow operates when people laugh at things at which one should not laugh. This means that it is possible to study and analyze the dark side of humanity during those moments when people, so to speak, lose self-control. Evidently, one cannot claim that all laughter is similar, nor that one accidental burst of laughter defines the whole person (see Smuts 2010). Even so, there are moments of laughter during which neglected features gain space through humor (in comparison to ego-ideals).

The question is, then, who makes the shadow laugh? Jung's answer would be the trickster. Trickster is not just an archaic phenomenon but an archetype that is present in everyone (see Jung 1980). It draws from the paradoxical nature of the human psyche which is full of joy and hatred, as well as selfish and altruistic tendencies. Essentially, the human being is a distorted whole. Disarray and confusion fuel Jung's trickster who challenges all order. An old biblical idea 'the good that I would, I do not: but the evil I would not, that I do' (Romans 7:19) describes this psychological aspect well. Jung writes that the trickster is a sum of contradictions. It does not have a fixed form, and it is hard to give an exact definition for a trickster, as Paul Radin reminds:

Trickster is at one and the same time creator and destroyer, giver and negator, he who dupes others and who is always duped himself (...) At all times he is constrained to behave as he does from impulses over which he has no control, he knows no good nor evil yet he is responsible for both. He possesses no values (...) is at the mercy of his passions and appetites, yet through his actions all values come into being. (Radin 1956, ix).

Because trickster is neither 'good' nor 'evil', he is not immoral either but amoral. This position allows trickster to confuse and to rattle the cultural structures, and for this reason, trickster is implicitly a political figure. Of course, this is nothing new. As Marianna Keisalo-Galván has pointed out, in the Western world, people are used to the interaction between politics and humor. As it happens, politics has its own court jesters (Keisalo-Galván 2011, 179). This all symbolizes comedians' role at the White House Correspondents' Dinner. Fittingly, Michelle Wolf's performance was the most controversial roast since Stephen Colbert's in 2006. Wolf did something that is not suitable for a comedienne in this type of

situation, that is, she made the collective shadow surface through humor. Wolf was accused of telling jokes that are inappropriate and after her humorous performance, it has been noted that professional comedians should not be invited to the Dinner any more (see Grynbaum 2018). But was Wolf a genuine trickster in a Jungian sense? In some respect, there are clearly features which fit well to the trickster profile. However, as Radin reminds:

every generation occupies itself with interpreting Trickster anew. No generation understands him fully but no generation can do without him. Each had to include him (Radin 1956, 168).

If Wolf had a clear political agenda, for example, against Trump and his administration, she took more privileges than are allowed for true tricksters. A Jungian trickster is not necessarily concerned about daily politics because he does not aim for political manifestos. In a social psychological sense, the trickster is a universal symbol that is always defined in new ways. Reactions to the trickster reflect unconsciously shared trickster aspects. “If we laugh at him, he grins at us. What happens to him happens to us” (Radin 1956, 169). Wolf’s performance needs to be analyzed more closely, if one wants to understand her humor and its social philosophical meaning.

The Shadow of the Trickster: Who has the Right to Humor?

Michelle Wolf attacked right-wing populism and post-factual politics in her performance. Her criticism targeted the current political situation in which facts or truth do not matter as much as emotions and personal motives. A couple of examples from her routine:

We should definitely talk about the women in the Trump administration. There’s Kellyanne Conway. Man, she has the perfect last name for what she does: Conway. It’s like if my name was Michelle Jokes Frizzy Hair Small Tits.

You guys gotta stop putting Kellyanne on your shows. All she does is lie. If you don’t give her a platform, she has nowhere to lie. It’s like that old saying: If a tree falls in the woods, how do we get Kellyanne under that tree?

Through humor, Wolf ridicules the modern era. But she recognizes the flip side of the post-truth politics; media in its different forms is a crucial part of the whole situation. Populism is big because populist politicians get so much attention:

You guys are obsessed with Trump. Did you use to date him? Because you pretend like you hate him, but I think you love him. I think what no one in this room wants to admit is that Trump has helped all of you. He couldn't sell steaks or vodka or water or college or ties or Eric, but he has helped you.

He's helped you sell your papers and your books and your TV. You helped create this monster, and now you're profiting off of him.

Obviously, it is hard to understand the whole totality of post-truth politics in short jokes because populism is a liquid concept, it is hard to grasp (e.g. Gellner & Ionescu 1969), and there are no clear joint points or common history between all the different kinds of populists (see Canovan 2004). Despite these challenges, there are certain common nominators between different populists: they tend to use similar concepts like the elite, the people, and the common opinion or common sense, and especially among right-wing populists, there is a general tendency to appeal to xenophobic emotions like anti-immigration policies. Typically, a populist leader presents him- or herself in such a way that he or she understands the people and shares their concern against the crooked elite who have forgotten the needs of common people and are lacking common sense (see Hirvonen & Pennanen 2018). Roughly put, populists want to create an emotional separation between 'us' and 'them' to feed the disappointments of the voters (Canovan 2004). In creating this separation, media has a role, as Wolf claims in her roast.

If the whole twisted modern situation is to be understood, one needs to take a step aside, and try to see the broader picture – not just particular deeds by the president or single jokes by a roaster. If one follows the long tradition of humanism and scientific thinking, the guiding principle is 'nothing human should be alien to me' (see Fromm 2006). This demand concerns also attempts of analyzing and trying to understand the era of post-truth politics. Drawing from this principle, one must start by noting that even Donald Trump should not be pathologized in an arrogant manner. This means that attaching labels like crazy, evil, or fool to a person is ideologically biased, if these labels are not backed up with any kind of

argumentation. For instance, in the International Society for Humor Studies annual humor conferences in 2017 and 2018 there were several papers analyzing how Trump is ridiculed in various kinds of humorous shows and memes. But it is striking that none of the papers analyzed how Trump uses humor in his own politics. In discussions, it was stated that Trump does not have a sense of humor at all, and that his statements are purely ludicrous, but not jokes nor humor. This is a critical under- and misevaluation. Among humor researchers (see Raskin 2008), it is widely accepted that humor is a central human feature. It touches in its various forms (almost) every human being in their everyday lives. To claim that a person has no sense of humor whatsoever is, if taken seriously, a devastating claim. It implicitly suggests that this kind of person lacks a central feature of humanity. This is, in most cases, unnecessary pathologizing. The question is, then, who has access to humor. Jung would argue that everyone, through the shadow which laughs at trickster-laden ideas.

Curiously enough, Donald Trump has been called both a court jester and a person who does not have a sense of humor (see Pickles 2017, Clopton 2018). If one is to understand what is going on in the world, these kinds of claims are over-simplistic in comparison to intellectually sincere research. It must be noted that Trump is not a court jester but possibly an incompetent politician, if evaluated from the perspective of how politics, so to speak, should be done. Second, it must be admitted that Trump has a sense of humor even if his humor taste differs from the so-called normal. Also, it is implausible to claim that there is nothing funny in Trump's humor because empirical evidence proves otherwise: there are millions of people who laugh with Trump. Following Jung, it must be admitted that the shadow and trickster are part of everyone. Even if one is not amused by the same things as Trump or his followers, his humor can be analyzed if one overcomes his or her own prejudices about humor. After this, it is possible to understand both Trump's character and his way of doing politics in a more precise manner. And perhaps what is more important, it possibly illuminates one's own relationship to humor. These aspects are crucial if one wants to understand the social significance of Wolf's performance in 2018.

During the presidential election campaign, Trump joked frequently, and presumably a vast number of people laughed with him. His most famous outbursts referred to the 2nd Amendment and hinted about the possibility of murdering Hillary Clinton, bragged how he as a celebrity has unlimited possibilities to grab the genitals of women, called Mexicans rapists and criminals, as well as belittled disabled persons. From a humanistic point of view,

these sexual, racist, and hostile speeches are not particularly funny; quite the contrary, they are disgusting. However, if one takes those speech acts as factual claims, it will lead to a grave misunderstanding; Trump was using humor as a rhetorical tool, for instance, when he speculated on the possibility that Clinton would be elected as a president and she would abolish the right to bear arms. The author is not making any value statements about the moral worth of Trump's humor but instead trying to acknowledge that he can produce humor – however appalling it may be. Here's an example:

If she (Hillary Clinton) gets to pick her judges, nothing you can do, folks. (...) Although the Second Amendment people — maybe there is, I don't know.

In between the lines, it can be read that Trump suggests violence against Hillary Clinton. This is vulgar and distasteful. However, the disturbing comment should not blur the fact that there is humor in Trump's claim – even if it does not amuse everyone. Even so, the reactions of Trump voters cannot be neglected as there are probably millions of people who laughed or sniggered when they heard the speech. Tastelessness does not equal humorlessness. Trump, in a twisted way, winked an eye to his voters; he was probably not seriously claiming that Clinton should be murdered, but still he sent a message to his voters. In an interesting political level, Trump and his followers most likely understood that his claim should not be taken literally, and if their opponents did, they would just show how they are humorless boors.

With these kinds of outbursts (one only needs to have a glance at his Twitter account), Trump frequently attacks the so-called political correctness³², and it is funny for some. This is very understandable; according to incongruity theory, humor is based on contradictions (e.g. Oring 2016). A traditional politician should not be offensive but respectful, and Trump does the exact opposite. With this he challenges the prevailing ideas of what a politician should look and sound like. This is an attempt to show power, or perhaps more accurately, unlimited self-admiration – he is something that is above the old policies. Humor, in this sense, establishes a power relation, and it is used as a tool.

This all raises the question whether Trump is a trickster who rattles the cages of the old-fashioned political sphere. Jung's trickster symbolizes the possibility of violating taboos and

32 As a side note, political correctness is criticized by a large group of comedians, too.

at the same moment liberating spirit. Trickster parodies social norms and structures, and he inverts hierarchies and values. In this, the trickster questions the prevailing order. (Russo 2008, 257.) However, as it was claimed above, trickster does not care about power. He offers only mayhem and uproar. In this sense, Trump is not a pure trickster at least, even if the consequences of his politics are disturbing. Nevertheless, if a comedian or comedienne wants to be truly trickster-like, he or she must challenge the borders of humor, too. This is what Wolf appears to have done based on the negative reactions she received after the performance at the Dinner.

There is an open controversy about humor tastes. Those who claim that Trump is not funny and does not have a sense of humor typically appreciate humor that ridicules Trump, and *vice versa*. In a societal level, there is a confrontation about who has the right to humor. If one considers the concept of humor, this situation is twisted. Humor is a deviation from the so-called normal, and these aberrations can be found among every possible worldview. Jung would remind that one cannot praise humor as such. Instead, he would ask: what are people really laughing at when they, say, mock politicians, or themselves? The focus must be on the hidden motives or inner attitudes behind humor. It must be asked, what are the hidden motivations of Wolf when she ridicules Donald Trump? On a conscious level, she may want to fight for a better world and make people laugh (although she claimed that she came to the Dinner to only tell jokes without any agenda). But on an unconscious level, she builds walls in between different groups of people, namely those who oppose and support Trump. In this sense, she comes close to the populists she so harshly criticizes; she also supports the divide between 'us' and 'them'. Laughter is rarely a unanimous expression. Fun can be scornful.

Jung claims that accepting that the shadow is a living phenomenon is key to mental health. Human beings are controversial creatures, and humor cannot be understood without admitting and analyzing this aspect of humanity (see Hart 2008, 98-101). In the absurd setting called human life, humor has a special role. Human beings are silly creatures and they can find sense in non-sense. Not necessarily through joking, but as an attitude towards their social, intellectual, and ethical environments. The absurdity of it all can make sense through humor. Human mind has the propensity to contradictions and non-sensical thinking which is, however, often pushed aside. From a trickster perspective, opposing elements come together:

(...) wisdom and folly appear as one and the same; and they are one and the same (...) Life is crazy and meaningful at once. And when we do not laugh over the one aspect and speculate about the other, life is exceedingly drab and everything is reduced to the littlest scale. There is then little sense and little nonsense either. (Jung 1980, 31)

Should Trump be Ridiculed?

The White House Correspondents' Dinner brings forth an intriguing question: what are the actual consequences of humor? Does Wolf change the world through roasting? The immediate discussion after her performance targeted the significance of the Dinner. There was speculation over the role of comedians on the occasion; some even claimed that comedians should not perform anymore at the Dinner. These immediate reactions, however, are not the whole picture, and one must analyze the wider spectrum around humor and politics.

There is a long-standing discussion whether humor is a socially conservative or revolutionary force (see Kuipers 2008). A large group of researchers suggests that humor is a counter-power in totalitarian societies: In the Soviet Union, people joked all the time about the regime, and via their humor questioned the prevailing order (Oring 2016). In the 1940s in concentration camps, for Jewish people humor was a tool for survival; it helped people to deal with the devastating situation (Franklin 2011). From these descriptions it can be seen that humor has (had) at least two different means of resistance: 1) fighting against the ruler, and being 2) an escape mechanism and a way to survive in a horrific situation. Similar logic can be found behind the current way of relating to those in power. This is related to Trump in at least two ways.

Obviously, Wolf was not the first to mock the president. Trump is constantly ridiculed in various kinds of humorous shows. Those who do not agree with Trump's politics try to resist him with humor. They mock and laugh at Trump's ludicrous and illogical statements and short-sightedness of his political choices. Trump is fuel for humor, like various academics have illustrated during conferences organized by the International Society of Humor Studies (2017 and 2018). Trump is surrounded by mockful jokes, pictures and

videos; for example, one can find humorous memes in which Trump excretes from his mouth, has sexual intercourse with the Russian president Vladimir Putin, and so forth. Humor, in light of these presentations, has helped to question the president's politics, as well as given breathing space in the insane situation. In short, it has been suggested both implicitly and explicitly that ridiculing Trump is normatively a good thing.

However, other theorists claim that humor is, eventually, a conservative power. Instead of igniting a revolution, humor tends to strengthen the *status quo*. For instance, Mikhail Bakhtin (1984) notes how humor may be critical in one moment when, through laughter, the world is turned upside down, social roles are distorted, and carnival kings burned; in short, chaos prevails. However, carnivals must end at some point, and their actual, but possibly hidden, function is to show how the normal circumstances make much more sense than the world of chaos. Carnivals offer an empty promise of freedom and happiness; the modern version of this kind of criticism is aimed at culture industry by critical theorists like Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (2002), who consider humor as a product of consumption and see it as a way to escape the aching boredom. However, they argue, fun does not cure the underlying problem, and only helps with the symptoms momentarily. Christie Davies (2011) has taken a step forward when he claims that jokes do not have any (or at best minimal) consequences on a society. Following this line of thought, it would be basically pointless to joke about, say, Donald Trump and his administration if one wanted to alter the social reality in which one lives.

From a Jungian perspective, the question whether humor is a critical or conservative power can be approached from a different point of view; instead of calculating the consequences of humor, it could be more sensible to try to understand the social significance of humor, or, what humor signals. Jung's theory of archetypes demonstrates that the question should be, what is the symbolical meaning of ridiculing, and on which emotional strivings is this kind of humor based. It should be asked, what kind of character trait humor is, and what are the dominant strivings that form the prevailing collective unconscious. This position triggers, at least, two significant questions: first, how do people treat other people with their humor, and what do they want to achieve via their humor. Clearly, the problem of humor is not only sociological but depth-psychological as well. (See also Ruch 1998.)

Right-wing populists are quite open with their vulgar statements, and this is not limited just to Trump. His short-termed communications director Anthony Scaramucci did not shy away from calling Reince Priebus ‘a fucking paranoid schizophrenic, a paranoiac’ during a phone call to a reporter from The New Yorker. In the European Parliament, one similar character has been Nigel Farage who has, for example, launched insulting attacks against Herman Van Rompuy and the whole Belgium. It is not an over-statement to say that these kinds of verbal abuses happen frequently among right-wing populists. And they appear to be funny to a whole lot of people.

These outbursts can and should be criticized, but nevertheless, there is a great number of people who admire this style of politics. Populists do not hide their loathing and despise towards those who are different. For instance, Trump appears to react rather quickly and impulsively via Twitter and does not blur his message with any kind of softening words. He speaks his mind in a straightforward manner. True, he appeals more to emotions than to facts, but nevertheless, he appears to be in a paradoxical sense honest. He lets his anger and selfishness shine out bright. He does not need to teach humility and unselfishness as those kinds of virtues are not of importance for him. In his thinking, brutal egoism is the key to victory, and everything else is of secondary importance. This position carries a strong cultural message; if the most powerful individual in the world can embrace a hateful attitude towards others, this kind of behavior and thinking is acceptable. This gives voice to the bitterness of masses who have felt themselves of secondary importance in a global world (compare with Fromm 1994). Their emotions, then, are acceptable too, if the most powerful person shares the same strivings. Trump is a symbol who justifies hate. Logically, degrading humor becomes more acceptable as well. These are negative traits and they can and should be criticized. For a liberal person, Trump represents all the spiteful features of humanity. He is an externalized shadow.

As it has been mentioned, populism is often accused of dividing people into ‘us’ and ‘them’. However, it can be argued that this happens also among those who keep ridiculing Trump and his administration. Social philosophers like Michel Foucault (1975) and Erich Fromm (1994) point out that in comparison to dictator regimes, in modern societies power is scattered, and it is hard to fight against an invisible enemy. Trump has changed all this; he is a clear target for all possible ridiculing. But is ridiculing Trump always ‘progressive’? Does it enhance the modern society? Or could this kind of humor stem from the personal shadow?

The modern situation is comparable to Fromm's analysis on different forms of hatred when he analyzed how people reacted to Hitler in 1930s and 1940s. In his essay 'Should we hate Hitler?' (1942) Fromm questions the collective reactions towards Adolf Hitler's war policies; not that he wanted to defend Hitler but to understand the social character of the Western alliance. Fromm distinguished two different types of hate: irrational (character-conditioned) and rational (reactive); rational hate is connected to life and growth, and it is triggered when there is an attack against these values. Irrational hate, on the other hand, is a continuous readiness to hate and destroy. Fromm believes this kind of hatred can be found also in jokes a person tells. In this sense, a sense of humor may be an indicator of irrational hate. (Fromm 1942, 220-221). To put in Jungian terms, irrational hatred is rooted in the shadow even if the rationalizations for the hate are defended by high moral aims.

This line of thinking offers an inspiring perspective on the contemporary cultural phenomenon of ridiculing Trump and his politics: on which strivings is this kind of aggressive mockery based? Should Trump be ridiculed? It is obvious that Trump's own (and probably his voters') humor stems from his yearning for power, and it should be criticized. However, it is not guaranteed that mockery towards Trump is any nobler if the motives or goals of this kind of humor are not clear. For evaluation of humor, one needs to understand his or her own personal motives behind humor, the possible consequences of humor, and the symbolic significance of humor. It is not enough to say that Trump should be ridiculed because, for instance, 'he is such a disgusting person,' or because it is funny to mock that kind of character.

According to Henri Bergson, humor and laughter work as a social corrective: if someone behaves in an odd manner, laughter offers a social punishment to straighten the fellow back in line (Bergson 1913). This might work, if a society is unified and there are only a few silly persons. However, if the social group is deeply divided, the effects of laughter hardly manage to correct anything. It is more probable that the group becomes more divided. True, laughter brings people together (Provine 2000), but this social mechanism typically works on like-minded people; humor can also exclude people from the cultural inner circle (Critchley 2002). Therefore, vulgar mockery against Trump will most likely be accepted only among those who are already against Trump. Aggressive ridiculing will probably cause aggressive counter-reactions by those who share the mocked values. Arthur Schopenhauer

analyzed this side of humor: if the basis of one's worldview is laughed at, laughter implies that there is something wrong with the very foundations of one's life. Because of this, laughing at a person's thoughts, political convictions or such, is always a straightforward and hurtful insult (Schopenhauer 1887, 281). Following Jung, shaming and hurting others – even if they disagree with you – is work of the shadow. Humor just for the sake of laughter is, eventually, very limited in a humanistic framework.

Obviously, it is possible to make distinctions between different types of humor. One way to do this is to estimate the power relations. Many comedians follow the idea of 'punching up', which means laughing at those in power; that is, when someone jokes about sensitive topics (e.g. rape, cancer, race), one should not target the victims but the perpetrators. This is an admirable guideline in an ethical sense, but it does not, unfortunately, justify all mockery towards the wrongdoers. Punching up is not a lifesaver which can be called out when needed. Instead, there must be stronger arguments for this type of humor, and one needs to consider, for instance, the motives of the joker as well as the probable consequences. (For a more detailed debate on ethics of humor, see de Sousa 1987, Smuts 2010, and Hietalahti 2016.) From a social psychological perspective, the reasons for mockery must be taken under critical analysis as well as the question why people laugh at harsh jokes.

If it is the shadow who laughs at the cruelest forms of humor, it is suspicious to set oneself and one's own sense of humor above everyone else. Presumably, most comedians laughing at Trump do not aim at a deep social change, but instead want to promote themselves. Trump appears to be mocking every possible minority because he feels himself superior to those; and his supporters have a taste of this feeling of superiority while laughing with him. However, it is quite hard to fight hatred with hatred. It may very well be that one shares equally suspicious character-rooted strivings as the target of the mockery, that is, Trump. The shadow operates also within the so-called liberal side.

It would be easy to claim that Wolf makes critical humor in her performance. Those who despise Trump may very well laugh. Those who agree with Trump's behavior may feel offended by roasting. However, as David Hart (2008, 105) noted, Jung wants to go deeper in his analysis. People should not hang desperately on their personal values but move towards collective meaning. Humor is not an exception to the rule. In other words, human beings should be aware of their own unconscious motives which form their sense of humor in a

collective framework. Often even beyond the most ‘humane’ or ‘socially critical’ humor the shadow can be found. To humiliate another human being through humor always demands justification; a mere ‘because it is funny’ or ‘I am punching up’ is not enough even if the target itself happens to promote despicable politics. Hateful humor must be based on defending humane ideals, not on hatred itself. As Aniela Jaffé has so eloquently put:

Jung, who was as familiar with the dangerous dual nature of the unconscious as with the importance of human consciousness, could offer mankind only one weapon against catastrophe; the call for individual consciousness, which seems so simple and yet is so arduous. Consciousness is not only indispensable as a counterpoise to the unconscious, and not only gives the possibility of meaning to life. It has also an eminently practical function. The evil witnessed in the world outside, in neighbors and neighboring people, can be made conscious as evil contents of our own psyche as well, and this insight would be the first step to a radical change in our attitude to our neighbors. (Jaffé 1978, 316.)

CONCLUSION

This chapter has clarified the significance of C.G. Jung’s concepts of the shadow and the trickster for analyzing political humor. As it has been argued, every single human being has his or her own personal shadow, but the shadow operates also on the collective level. It represents the neglected side of humanity. Jung reminds that the even those who consider themselves liberal and progressive, may have dark motives, too. Humor, even if targeted at the most controversial president in decades, can stem from irrational hatred, and not, for example, high moral values. Amusement in itself is of little worth.

Jung’s theory of the archetypes is still valid, but one should not take it as a scientific theory. Instead, Jung’s ideas can be used if they are understood metaphorically. They should be understood as a personality theory which offers a valuable contribution to both humor research and political studies. As it has been shown, Jung’s theoretical works complement humanistic thinking, too. Humanism demands that nothing should be alien to oneself. If this premise is taken seriously, it forces everyone to admit that even the most distasteful people do have a sense of humor. A personal humor taste cannot dictate this universal feature. Even

if Trump speaks about minorities in a disrespectful manner, he still most likely has a sense of humor. When this is recognized, populist politics can be understood more accurately. Also, this kind of brutal humor offers a mirror to the liberals and their sense of humor: are the motives behind mockery (in a depth psychological sense) similar to those of right-wing supporters? Inhumane politics must be criticized, but at the same moment, critics have to be aware of hidden aspects of their own personalities. That is, people must have the courage to confront the collectively shared archetypes of shadow and trickster. This means, eventually, the courage to be human.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank doctor Tero Vaaja for all his help and support. The research was supported by the Kone Foundation and the University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

REFERENCES

- Amir, L. (2014). *Humor and the Good Life in Modern Philosophy*. Shaftesbury, Hamann, Kierkegaard. New York: SUNY Press.
- Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. H. Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Berger, A. A. (1993). *An Anatomy of Humor*. New York: Routledge.
- Bergson, H. (1913). *Laughter. An essay on the meaning of the comic*. Trans. Cloudesley Brereton & Fred Rothwell. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Canovan, M. (2004). Populism for political theorists?. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 9(3): 241–252.
- Clopton, E. (2018). Listen: Seth Meyers on Trump’s Lack of Humor, Giving Voice to Women Writers. In *Variety*. June 29, 2018.
- Critchley, S. (2002). *On Humour*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Davies, Christie. (2011). *Jokes and Targets*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- De Sousa, R. (1987). When is it Wrong to Laugh? In J. Morreall (ed.) *The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor*. (pp. 226-249). Albany: State University Press of New York Press.

- Douglas, C. (2008). The historical context of analytical psychology. In P. Young-Eisendrath & T. Dawson (eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Jung*. (pp. 19-38). Cambridge University Press.
- Freud, S. (1968a). *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*. Trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
- Freud, S. (1968b). Humour. In *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXI (1927-1931)*. (pp.159-166). Trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press.
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, New York: Random House.
- Frankl, V. (2011). *Man's Search for Meaning*. London etc.: Rider.
- Fromm, E. (2010). *The Revolution of Hope*. New York: AMHF.
- Fromm, E. (2006). *Beyond the Chains of Illusions: My Encounter with Marx and Freud*. New York/London: Continuum.
- Fromm, E. (1994). *Escape from Freedom*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Fromm, E. (1942). Should we hate Hitler? *Journal of Home Economics*. Vol. 34, No. 4, April, 1942.
- Gellner, E. & Ionescu, G. (Eds.) (1969). *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*. New York: Macmillan.
- Grynbaum, M. M. (2018) Did Michelle Wolf Kill the White House Correspondents' Dinner? In *The New York Times* April 30, 2018.
- Hart, D. L. (2008). The classical Jungian school. In P. Young-Eisendrath & T. Dawson (eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Jung*. (pp. 95-106). Cambridge University Press.
- Hietalahti, J. (2016). Humor and Disobedience: Understanding Controversial Humor. *Filosofiska Notiser*, 3 (3), 23-44.
- Hirvonen, O. & Pennanen, J. (2018). Populism as a pathological form of politics of recognition. *European Journal of Social Theory*. First published May 3, 2018.
- Horkheimer, M. & Adorno T. W. (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment. Philosophical Fragments*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Hurley, M. M., Dennett, D. C. & Adams, R. B., Jr. (2011). *Inside Jokes. Using Humor to Reverse-Engineer the Mind*. Cambridge, Massachusetts/London, England: The MIT Press.

- Jaffé, A. (1978). Symbolism in the Visual Arts. In C. G. Jung & A. Jaffé (Eds.) *Man and his symbols* (pp. 255-322). London: Picador
- Jung, C. G. (2011). *Answer to Job (From Vol. 11 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung)*. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. ebook. Princeton University Press.
- Jung, C. G. (1980). *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious (Vol. 9 Part I of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung)*. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Jung, C. G. (1978a). *Aion. Researches into the phenomenology of the self. (Vol. 9 Part II of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung)* Trans. R.F.C. Hull. London & Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Jung, C. G. (Ed.) (1978b). *Man and his symbols*. London: Picador.
- Jung, C. G. (1977). *Psychology and the Occult*. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. Princeton University Press.
- Jung, C.G. (1967). *Symbols of Transformation, Collected Works, Volume 5, Princeton, N.J.:* Princeton University Press.
- Jung, C. G. & Jaffé, A. (1965) *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. New York: Random House.
- Keisalo-Galván, M. (2011). *Cosmic Clowns. Convention, Invention, and Inversion in the Yaqui Easter Ritual*. University of Helsinki.
- Korhonen, A. (1999). *Fellows of Infinite Jest. The Fool in Renaissance England*. University of Turku.
- Kuipers, G. (2008) The sociology of humor. In V. Raskin (Ed.) *The Primer of Humor Research*. (pp. 361-398.) Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Morreall, J. (2009). *Comic Relief: A Comprehensive Philosophy of Humor*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Morreall, J. (1983). *Taking Laughter Seriously*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (2006) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Trans. A. del Caro. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Noll, R. (1997). *The Jung Cult: The Origins of a Charismatic Movement*. New York etc.: Free Press Paperbacks.
- Oring, E. (2016). *Joking Asides: The Theory, Analysis, and Aesthetics of Humor*. University Press of Colorado.
- Otto, B. K. (2001). *Fools are everywhere: the court jester and the world*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

- Pickles, A. J. (2017). The anthropology of Trump: what to do when the court jester takes charge. In *The Conversation*. August 23, 2017.
- Plato (2001). *Philebus by Plato*. Trans. B. Jowett. ebook. Retrieved from: Ebook Central. Informations, Inc.
- Provine, R. R. (2000). *Laughter: A Scientific Investigation*. New York: Viking.
- Radin, P. (1956). *The Trickster: a study in American Indian mythology*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Raskin, V. (Ed.) (2008). *The Primer of Humor Research*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Ruch, W. (Ed.) (1998). *The Sense of Humor. Explorations of a Personality Characteristic*. Berlin/New York, Mouton de Gruyter.
- Russo, J. (2008). A Jungian analysis of Homer's Odysseus. In P. Young-Eisendrath & T. Dawson (eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Jung*. (pp. 253-267). Cambridge University Press.
- Schopenhauer, A. (1887) *The World as Will and Idea. Volume II* [Online] Trans. R. B. Haldane & J. Kemp. Boston
- Smuts, A. (2010). The Ethics of Humor: Can Your Sense of Humor Be Wrong? *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*. June 2010, Vol. 13, Issue 3. 333-347.
- Whitmont, E. C. (1991). The Evolution of the Shadow. In C. Zweig & J. Abrams (eds.), *Meeting the Shadow. The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*. (pp. 12-19). New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher / Penguin.
- Zijderveld, A. (1982). *Reality in a Looking-glass: Rationality through an Analysis of Traditional Folly*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Zweig, C. & Abrams, J. (1991). Introduction: The shadow side of everyday life. In C. Zweig & J. Abrams (eds.), *Meeting the Shadow. The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*. (pp. xvi-xxv). New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher / Penguin.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Analytical Psychology: A version of depth psychology or psychoanalysis developed and practiced by Carl Jung and his followers.

Archetype: A typical pattern of behavior among human beings. Symbols the aspects which are universally shared. Archetypes are part of the collective unconscious.

Collective Unconscious: A source of motivation of which people are unaware. Refers to socially shared ways of feeling and acting.

Humanism: A philosophical stance which values every human being as equal. Humanism is based on the idea of human progression and freedom.

Populism: A political ideology which separates 'the elite' and 'the people'. Appeals to socially shared fears by feeding xenophobic attitudes towards strangers and outsiders.

Shadow: An archetype which is the neglected ego-ideal. Commonly referred as the 'unknown dark side' of humanity. In many ways similar to Sigmund Freud's concept of the unconscious.

Trickster: An archetype which can be located on the borderline of conscious and unconscious thought. A joker who does not obey traditional moral codes such as 'good' or 'evil'.

Outi Hakola

University of Helsinki, Finland

2. Post-Gender Comedy at the White House Correspondents' Dinner

INTRODUCTION

Debates about how well gender and politics play together have appeared and continue to appear in the public discussion in the United States, and they are part of the history of the White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA) as well. The Association's dinner, its yearly networking event, started by hosting 50 men to honor new political correspondents in 1921. Although female political journalists were not unheard of, this male-dominated field was slow to open its doors. Women have been allowed to participate in the event only since 1962, after White House reporter Helen Thomas protested the exclusive attitude and allegedly asked John F. Kennedy to pressure the association. (Parsons & Condon, 2018; Waisanen, 2015, p. 342; Lightman, 2013, July 20; Lutes, 2006.)

Besides journalism, entertainment has been part of the event since the beginning. Although women have always been some of the performers, they have remained at the margins in this role as well. Since 1983, a comedian has typically hosted the dinner. So far, we have seen 22 male comedians, some of them appearing twice and Jay Leno four times, and 5 female comedians – Paula Poundstone, Elayne Boosler, Wanda Sykes, Cecily Strong, and Michelle Wolf. Due to these unbalanced numbers, an invitation for a woman host always seems political. Political impression is highlighted after Wolf's controversial performance in 2018

resulted in WHCA's breaking with tradition and inviting a (male) biographer instead of a comedian to host in 2019.

Margaret Talev, Senior White House Correspondent, who selected the entertainer for 2018, argued that she chose Michelle Wolf because she is a rising star and a woman, and the past couple of years have been important for women in the US (CNN, 2018, April 29). The choice was a reaction to the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment, which has dominated media and public discussions since 2017. Donald Trump's presidency has also inspired gendered politics. Trump often uses disrespectful and sexist language about women and speaks for conservative gender roles and attitudes. Consequently, his presidency has been shadowed by problematic relationships with many women (voters). For example, the Women's March (2017, 2018 and 2019) was created to criticize unequal gender politics and values.

At the same time, skeptical attitudes towards female politicians have prevailed. When Hillary Clinton ran against Trump, some opined that a woman cannot be the President of the United States, and thus assuming essential distinctions between female and male politicians. At the 2018 WHCA dinner, this assumption took another form. Several journalists and members of public criticized Michelle Wolf's monologue for her aggressive style in discussing women in Trump's administration. As a woman criticizing other women, she was considered too mean, unfair, and disloyal to her gender.

These responses show that Wolf's performance challenged the cultural and gendered expectations related to politics and political comedy, which, due to their aggressive and critical nature, are often seen as male spaces. By adopting similar outspoken strategies, Wolf challenged the common understanding of what a female comedian and political satirist can and cannot do. This practice, according to Eric Shouse and Patrice Oppliger (2012), can introduce new possibilities of "post-gender" comedy. For them, strategies of being arrogant, vulgar, and aggressive (like many male comedians) break down the assumed ideals and marginalized category of "women's comedy". In this chapter, by looking at the gendered practices of the WHCA dinner hosting, I further explore the possibilities and limitations of post-gender comedy as a concept and a practice.

Post-gender, as a concept, is one of the so-called post-theories within critical theory. Ralina L. Joseph argues that many post-theories were intended to shift the focus of thought beyond typical analytical categories, such as gender or race. However, the use of the suffixed term merely emphasizes it, and sometimes, by focusing on the “post”, seeking to remove the topic from view, the discussion only manages to make it a more visible, operative and functional concept. (Joseph, 2009, pp. 239, 248.) By using the WHCA dinner as a case study I approach the dimensions of post-gender – what it could mean, and what role gender does or does not play in this context.

In this regard, the WHCA dinner is an interesting event because of its historical gendered practices, and because of its public use of stand-up comedy for the evening’s entertainment. Stand-up is a part of popular culture in which gender is imagined, performed, and represented. Michelle Wolf’s monologue at the 2018 WHCA dinner prompted varied responses, and has created an interesting window into our cultural attitudes about gender because all shifts in the popular culture make changing cultural dynamics visible. In order to discuss the dimensions of post-gender, I study Wolf’s comedy routine and Twitter reactions to this performance. In addition, I make some comparisons to other women hosts at the earlier WHCA dinners.

Within this study, Twitter represents the public responses to Wolf’s performance. I analyze the Twitter discussion that took place on the day of the event and the following 10 days (hashtags #WHCD and #CorrespondentsDinner from April 28 to May 8, 2018). During this time, there were thousands of tweets, but only a small portion of those tweets focused on the gender perspective. Most of the tweets discussed the role of comedy in the event, what is expected of the comedian, and on the bipartisan politics and bipartisan interpretations of her comedy. A minority of tweets had a gendered perspective, and in this study, the gendered material consists of 250 partially anonymized tweets (the analysis avoids usernames and links to the tweets, but contains quotes). Data was analyzed with content analysis. Based on the result that the overwhelming majority of tweets did not bring up gender as an important factor, it could be argued that we are, indeed, entering the age of post-gender comedy, in which the defining factor of a comedian is not their gender but what they say. However, after a closer look at the tweets that explicitly mention gender, post-gender as a cultural practice is also challenged. In my analysis, I bring forward three main themes visible in the tweets – arguments about “girl power”, the aggressive style of roasting, and debates on

whether a woman can criticize other women. Before turning to these themes, I discuss the context of the WHCA's use of comedy.

CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT WOMEN IN POLITICAL COMEDY

The WHCA dinners celebrate (political) journalism and the freedom of the press, but the event has always included entertainment as well. In the early years, the entertainers were singers, variety show stars, and actors. Since the mid-1980s, the role of popular culture has increased and the entertainers tend to be stand-up comedians from late-night comedy, political impersonators, and sitcom stars. (Parsons & Condon, 2018; Rossing, 2017, pp. 169-170.) The contemporary entertainers represent American political comedy, which have shifted the event towards satire and even self-irony. This is visible in the President's role as well. Even in the early years, Presidents used lighter tones in their speeches at the event, but since John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson invested in humorous presentations, the comedic approaches have become expected even from the Presidents (Waisanen, 2015, pp. 336-343). With comedians, the event is a roast, which typically targets the President and his administration, other well-known political figures, media and journalists.

Roasting is an aggressive form of stand-up comedy. It is a performative event of public mockery of a well-known person. The insulting jokes offer criticism and ridicule, yet often the jokes are good-natured and not necessarily meant to harm the target, who is often present (Rossing, 2017, p. 168, Ritchie, 2014, pp. 34-39). Although roasting is its own performative genre, it has strong connections to satire where mockery and attack are present. Lisa Colletta writes that satire "exposes human vices and folly to scorn and ridicule, and its weapons are the comedic strategies of parody and burlesque: inversion, exaggeration, contradiction, incongruity, and juxtaposition." She also adds irony to the list, because irony works on what is said versus what is meant. (Colletta, 2014, pp. 209, 214, 218.) Political satire thus mocks the absurdities of the political field, and it aims to problematize our perceptions by presenting well-known issues from a new perspective. Sean Zwagerman (2014, pp. 177-179) sees this potential for problematizing as a sign of transformative humor in which the audience is invited – through incongruity, word play, multiple meanings – to take a critical attitude through the distance created by the humor.

Thus, as part of the WHCA's roasting, satire and irony aim to expose inconsistencies within politics and political journalism.

Because political comedy is an aggressive form of comedy, it has been assumed to suit male comedians better (e.g. Sherine, 2016, August 25). Within the American comedy industry women have been welcome to play comedic roles in romantic comedies or sitcoms, and after more women started to write their own material and make headlines in the later part of the 20th century, women were expected to joke about "women's issues". As female comedians have gained more visibility, they have started to step outside their expected roles. (Mizejewski, 2014, pp. 2, 19-21.) This includes satire, which, as Colletta argues, suits women well because they have a long tradition of wanting to destabilize existing (gendered) societal structures. Thus, their satire about "traditional and conventional ways of knowing and understanding the world" offer great possibilities for critical and comedic distance. (Colletta 2014, p. 209.)

Recent studies thus oppose the presumed masculine and feminine spheres of comedy. Contemporary scholars argue that while it is important to examine differences and similarities within comedic styles between comedians, gender is not a functional explanatory factor or category because it is not only part of patriarchal culture, but also an overgeneralizing, simplifying and essentializing category (Zwagerman, 2014, p. 173; Shouse & Oppliger, 2012, pp. 206-207; Gilbert, 2004, pp. 170-172). This attitude suggests that there might be room, or at least a desire, for post-gender comedy.

The possibility of post-gender comedy, however, is not only related to comedy practices, but to audiences, social values and attitudes. In stand-up comedy, and roasting in particular, the response of the live audience is a crucial part of the performance, but the WHCA dinner crowd is not a typical stand-up audience. Klaus Dodds and Philip Kirby (2013, pp. 46-56) argue, based on Stephen Colbert's controversial roasting of the President Bush in 2006, that the WHCA dinner is prone to non-laughter, when laughter is expected but the performance fails to be funny due to the social context. Thus, when humor gets too pointed or critical at the WHCA dinner, the comedy fails to reach its live audience, because these people belong to Washington's inner circle, and as such, targets of the roast.

In Michelle Wolf's case, the C-SPAN recording reveals that part of the dinner crowd laughed but the other part did not (Wolf, 2018, April 28). These cases of non-laughter were reflected in media responses where several journalists and news outlets argued that the WHCA roasting is supposed to be gentle and good-natured, and Wolf's aggressive style did a disservice to the dinner's main goal to honor scholarship and advances in journalism (e.g. Geier, 2018, April 29; Griffiths & Calderone, 2018, April 29). This brings up how roasting and comedic tones in the WHCA dinner are always balancing between expectations and implementation, between mockery and respectful treatment (e.g. Rossing, 2017, pp. 175-176; Waisanen, 2015, p. 352).

The controversial reception caused the WHCA to release a statement, which further highlighted the interpretations of the roast as too mean and aggressive: "Last night's program was meant to offer a unifying message about our common commitment to a vigorous and free press while honoring civility, great reporting and scholarship winners, not to divide people. Unfortunately, the entertainer's monologue was not in the spirit of that mission." (WHCA, 2018, April 29.) However, there is another audience, the American public, who can follow the event through media, and these audiences, too, had conflicting views on Wolf's show. The following analysis focuses on the (post-)gender perspective of these responses.

GENDER CATEGORIES AND POST-GENDER COMEDY

In discussing post-gender, several scholars have included or hinted at a desire to deconstruct gender distinctions, even to the point where gender no longer matters. In these cases, the suffix refers to moving beyond existing sex/gender categories. For Lucy Nicholas (2014, 2-3), for example, post-gender is an imagined future where essential and oppositional gender binaries and hierarchies no longer define our experiences, but there are other ways of being, relating to others, and sharing norms. Possibilities for post-gender existence have been sought from unstable and non-binary gender categories, queer perspectives, androgynes, and post-human existence, such as cyborgs (e.g. Nicholas, 2014; Deutscher, 1997, p. 13; Haraway, 1991; Butler, 1990). As a desire to remove gender distinctions, post-gender comedy could eliminate gender as an important element within comedy, including the

gender of the comedians, their performances (style, and content), and reception of the comedy.

This is what some (female) comedians at the WHCA dinner have asked for. For example, Paula Poundstone, who was the first woman to host the dinner during the George H.W. Bush administration in 1992, refuses to see her monologue as part of gender politics. Instead, she argues she was performing comedy in what happened to be a male-dominated field. (Kahn, 2015, April 27.) There is no recording of her monologue, but her overall style supports her statement. Poundstone is known for satirical political and social commentary, delivered through a playful, mischievous, and gentle style. Her on-stage presence does not underline gender; instead, it includes some androgynous elements. (E.g. Gilbert, 2004, pp. 98-99; Lavin, 2004, pp. 87, 92-94.)

Poundstone, thus, actively uses post-gender strategies in her comedy – she desires to step outside gender categories. She is not alone in her emphasis on non-gender narratives. A year later, during the first year of Bill Clinton’s presidency, Elayne Boosler took the stage, and she too refused to be treated as a female comedian, but as a comedian who does the job. She sees this as a way of refusing to marginalize herself. (Kahn, 2015, April 27.) Thus, both Boosler and Poundstone reject the marginalized category of “women’s comedy”, which assumes opposition to “mainstream” comedy.

Compared to Poundstone’s androgynous strategy, Boosler uses the observational style to create a sense of critical distance (Gilbert, 2004, p. 125). At the WHCA dinner, a big part of her routine focused on sex scandals, sexual harassment, and sex education, which could be narrated from an openly gendered position. Yet her reporting style lacked any use of personal experiences and kept the discussion on a general level. Instead of focusing on individuals or even any gender, she criticized the American public for their endless fascination on other people’s sex lives. (Boosler, 1993, May 1.) Thus, her strategy to step out of gender position is to aim for a sense of “objectivity”, which deals with her style, not so much with herself and her embodied presence as a woman.

Both Poundstone’s and Boosler’s strategies for working in a male-dominated field draw attention away from their gender in order to create professional identities that highlight individual stories of post-gender desires. Yet, neither of them were completely able to

escape from gendered interpretations. Poundstone, for example, was disappointed to note that after her performance at the WHCA, news outlets focused more on what she had worn (a white tuxedo) than what she had said, and she saw this treatment as a gendered practice (Kahn, 2015, April 27). Additionally, because it took 16 years before another woman was invited to host the dinner, and due to the small number of female hosts, their marginalized positions as hosts are constantly brought to the attention of the audience. Thus, although Poundstone and Boosler use their performance styles to create individual narratives of comedians rising above gender categories, they ultimately fail to reach these goals because the audience still reads their performances in the gendered context. This brings to mind Joseph's (2009, pp. 249-250) critique on post-gender: individual post-gender narratives are often identity strategies, which do not reflect the gendered perspectives of the wider social context.

Besides being too idealistic, the concept of post-gender has also been criticized from the potential desire to deconstruct all sex/gender categories. According to this criticism, gender is an existing identity and social category, and its denial would do a disservice to understanding societal tensions (Deutscher, 1997, pp. 11, 13). In the 21st century, when women have a somewhat stronger footing in the comedy industry, the WCHA comedians Wanda Sykes (2009), Cecily Strong (2015), and Michelle Wolf (2018) have all openly acknowledged that they speak as women (and feminists). For Sykes, her gender and sexuality add to her critique of the white gaze on African Americans (Mizejewski, 2014, pp. 155-158, 177-179). Strong, on her part, acknowledged that she was younger than most hosts, and a woman, and says she is glad that they asked a woman even though she was not going there to make big statements (Johnson, 2015, April 20; Rahman, 2015, April 23). Wolf, similarly, is comfortable with the term feminist and often uses gendered expectations and hypocrisy as part of her routine. At the WHCA's dinner, Wolf took the stage as a woman. She said, "It's 2018, and I am a woman, so you can't shut me up", and later on stated that the MeToo campaign "is probably the reason I'm here." (Wolf, 2018, April 28.)

These women, instead of asking for a non-gender response, emphasize that they are speaking from the position of a woman. Gilbert argues that because stand-up comedy has been a male-dominated field for so long in the United States, women continue performing from a marginal position. This position, however, does not reduce their comedy to a marginalized category of "women's comedy", but instead provides a powerful rhetorical

position from which to criticize and deconstruct society and culture. (Gilbert, 2004, pp. xv, 173.) Sykes, Strong, and Wolf, who make their gender part of their comedy, use this gender-identity strategy. Wolf emphasizes this perspective further by addressing women in the audience as her main audience, as part of “us”. She warns women in the audience “Fox News is here. So, you know what that means, ladies: Cover your drinks. Seriously.” And she positions herself as a representative of women by asking “What would I do without Megyn Kelly? You know, probably be more proud of women.” (Wolf, 2018, April 28.) These rhetorical choices emphasize her gender identity, the position from which she sees the world.

On Twitter, part of the audience responded to this gender-identity question. This was one of the three main themes dealing with gender aspects of Wolf’s performance. Most of these responses were positive and supportive of the comedian. They saw Michelle Wolf as a feminist force or a representative of “girl power”. These tweets called her “a true model and inspiration for women” and “beyond awesome”, or were supportive, with such phrases as “you go girl”, “women need your voice”, and “I see you girl!” For many, Wolf’s comedy and the invitation to host were a positive sign that women are represented in the fields of popular culture, political comedy, and public discussion. Most of the tweets taking this stance saw Wolf as representing girl power and/or feminism, and thus being empowering to the audience. Her performance was also interpreted as a sign of women’s resistance to current policies and politics in the US, and as a way to break into the “boys only club”.

Both Wolf and the tweets supporting her feminist approach highlight that, by taking the stage, Wolf (and women) took rhetorical power. For these same reasons, women exercising control in a public arena can meet resistance. Although Wolf’s supporters saw her embrace of authority as a positive issue, there was also a reactionary side. Other tweets displayed Wolf in a negative light as an angry feminist. For them, her identity represented a threat, highlighted in a tweet arguing “I wonder how much she was paid to speak at the #WHCD... And how much you have had to pay to keep women from speaking again?” In these tweets, too, gender remains an important identity category: whereas supportive messages saw the performance as a sign of inclusive cultural practices, the negative tweets opposed this inclusion.

It is clear that the WHCA's dinner performances have not diminished gender distinctions. In the 1990s, women tended to rebel against these existing categories, and in the 21st century women performers have more openly embraced gender as part of their identity as comedians. Most importantly, all the female hosts have been recognized in public as belonging to a different category than male hosts. Consequently, post-gender comedy is not able to (nor does not necessarily want to) stop gender mattering or making a difference. However, this does not mean that there could not be such a thing as post-gender comedy. Instead of looking at the sex/gender of the performer, we need to look post-gender tendencies regarding the style and content of their comedy. In this interpretation, "post" would not try to hide gender from view, but to present it in another way.

RESISTING GENDERED COMEDY STYLE

Another central gender-related theme in the analyzed tweets was that aggressive roasting is culturally more acceptable from a male comedian, and that a female comedian is out-of-line and out-of-character when she acts mean. In these tweets, the problem appeared to be that it was a *woman* who was mean and vulgar, instead of being classy and well-behaved lady. Wolf was described as "rude, crude, and socially unacceptable" and a "disgusting, distasteful, foul, vile" woman. These descriptions were seen to break the expected behavior, and some saw it as sign either of immaturity or being poorly brought up. For example, she was compared to mean girls in high school, and someone argued that Wolf's performance "shows what little class, dignity & respect" she was raised with.

This kind of criticism is not new. Women who adopt aggressive, vulgar, or cruel styles are sometimes interpreted as unfunny, unfeminine, or acting-male, because they have to deal with cultural assumptions that aggressive comedy is masculine. Politics and political humor are both seen to work in a male space because of their aggressive and power-wresting nature. Thus, raunchiness and off-color language are often understood as male privilege, and women are expected to avoid antagonistic or overly forward styles in their comedy. (Graban, 2014, pp. 157-158; Mizejewski, 2014, pp. 17-18; Shouse & Oppliger, 2012, p. 205.) Wolf, however, has never attempted to conform to these expectations. In her work, including an HBO special that was ironically named "Nice Lady" (2017), her jokes for *Late Night with Seth Meyers* and her role as a correspondent in *The Daily Show with Trevor*

Noah emphasize her controversial and aggressive style of (political) commentary. Even before the WHCA dinner, she was known from her direct, aggressive and even hostile jokes, all while she embraces her gender-identity. As Gilbert (2004, p. 173) argues, when a woman does aggressive stand-up comedy, she is not being “male”, instead she is questioning the cultural assumption that aggressive humor is inherently male.

By challenging the assumption of how women should perform, Wolf shows that post-gender might have more potential when discussing style, instead of sex/gender definitions. Then, the focus is turned towards cultural practices and representations where post-gender does not hide gender as an identity category but refers to breaking down cultural hierarchies related to gender. Thus post-gender practices can refuse to differentiate between marginalized “women’s comedy” and (male) “mainstream” comedy. Here, “post” claims that gender should not define the content and style of performed comedy, even as it continues to recognize “gender” as a social category.

Wolf is not the only performer at the WHCA dinner who has been accused of being too aggressive. Wanda Sykes’ jokes about Rush Limbaugh, who had publicly hoped for Obama’s presidency to fail, caused a lot of controversy. Sykes (2009, May 9) compared Limbaugh to Osama bin Laden, and this was seen by many as going too far. Here, similarly, the criticism was directed at the aggressive style of the jokes. For example, Karl Rove, Fox News Contributor, commented: “at the White House correspondents’ dinner, you expect there to be good-natured fun poked at the president, poked at the press, poked at other public figures. But these were nasty, vicious, mean, ugly comments and had no place at the dinner.” (Fox News, 2009, May 11.) Sykes interpreted this criticism as a reaction to transgressive black laughter. And because she has pictured herself as a troublemaker, outsider, and outspoken critic of white culture, she has purposefully sought to make the African American perspective visible and resist the white gaze by expressing both anger and sexuality. (Mizejewski, 2014, pp. 155-179.)

Thus, both Sykes and Wolf shift cultural expectations by being aggressive. Similarly, it could be argued that if women’s aggressive style can be seen as a sign for post-gender comedy, it would be wrong to assume that all post-gender comedy should be aggressive. Instead, the whole point would be not to expect certain types of comedy from comedian based on their gender. Thus, whereas Sykes and Wolf can be seen to shift the boundaries

within the field, we should allow different styles for all genders. For example, Sykes and Wolf could be compared to Colbert's (2006, April 29) similarly controversial performances. Yet, some other comedians, such as Cecily Strong (2015, April 25) and Seth Meyers (2011, April 30), have taken a more good-natured approach to roasting. They also should avoid gendered categorization, because using gender as an explanation for a style always involves a question of power hierarchies.

Although, or because, Wolf's aggressive style was criticized, it carries post-gender potential with it. (Sexual) aggressiveness and political incorrectness can break down gendered expectations and break into "boys-only" spaces, even if it does not always fare well with all members in the audience (Foy, 2015, pp. 703, 705; Mizejewski, 2014, p. 5). Some scholars have argued that due to women's marginalized role in society (and in the political field in particular), women have the anarchistic and transformative potential to shift hierarchies and power relations, which suits political comedy perfectly (Mizejewski, 2014, pp. 15-18; Gilbert, 2004, pp. xii, xiv, 170). Similarly, for example, Sarah Silverman's hostile humor challenges assumptions about "women's comedy" and attacks the norms of comedy, and thereby creates room for post-gender stand-up (Shouse & Oppliger 2012, p. 213). Thus, a negative reaction to a comedian's aggressive style can also be seen as a reaction to these shifting hierarchies. The tweets that criticized Wolf for crossing cultural expectations of gender show that these gendered attitudes still exist. However, other tweets proved that there is growing demand to allow all genders to use aggressive strategies. Several tweets showing support for Wolf argued that it seems that people have double standards for evaluating women, because many male comedians in the history of the dinner have been similarly aggressive in their roasting. It seems that these people would have seen Wolf differently if she had been a man.

Interestingly, in Wolf's case, her being "unladylike" was also used as a tool to disagree with what she was saying. In these tweets, being offended was not so much about what is feminine or masculine, but disgust served as an effective tool of rejection. In particular, jokes about abortion and use of curse words were often mentioned in these tweets. For example, one argued that "these nasty women" should not be given "platforms to allow them to joke about ending life". Also, there was a general understanding of her being hateful and aggressive towards different people and institutions. Thus, the question of style blends with the question of message.

WOMEN LAUGHING AT WOMEN

The question of how each gender should be treated was an important part of the Twitter debate, which targeted not only Wolf's style, but also the content of her monologues. At the dinner, she joked about multiple targets – Republicans, Democrats, and media outlets. Her main targets, however, were President Trump and his administration. She joked about Trump's Russian connections and his controversial relationship with media, and called him out for being a racist, being bad in bed, bribing off porn stars, etc. These jokes were an expected part of the evening's program, but in addition, Wolf criticized several women in Trump's administration. She called Ivanka Trump, Kellyann Conway and Sarah Huckabee Sanders disappointments to other (white) women. For example, Wolf made fun of Ivanka Trump by saying, "She was supposed to be an advocate for women, but it turns out she's about as helpful to women as an empty box of tampons." (Wolf, 2018, April 28.)

Jokes that criticized these women were at the center of the post-show debate. Wolf, as a woman, was held responsible for attacking other women. Her act was seen as a disloyal gender practice, which was a disservice to women's (political) empowerment. People tweeted, for example, "So much for Women supporting Women", and "Women bullying women. Is that supposed to be acceptable?" Within this discussion, the bipartisan dimension, a typical topic for the WHCA's comedy hosts, was also visible (Rossing, 2017, pp. 176-177). Wolf's jokes were seen as representing liberal women attacking conservative women, and even claiming a "war on women" in this biased sense: "Liberals pretend to stand up for women, unless those women are conservative".

The attack on women was interpreted as a provocation, and the focus on the looks of Sarah Huckabee Sanders became the symbol of this. Wolf compared Sanders to the dystopian character Aunt Lydia from *The Handmaid's Tale*, criticized her way of handling White House press meetings, and called her an "Uncle Tom for white women". However, her calling Sanders a liar got the most attention. Wolf joked that Sanders "burns facts, and then she uses that ash to create a perfect smoky eye. Like maybe she's born with it, maybe it's lies. It's probably lies." (Wolf, 2018, April 28.) This joke was decoded by many as a mean-spirited commentary on Sanders' looks. Several people argued it is not appropriate to focus on women's looks and appearance: "No one deserves to BE ABUSED. Over makeup? Personal appearance?" For them, the joke was unfair and sexist.

Rossing notes, however, that the WHCA's dinner roasts often laugh at the outer appearances of politicians, instead of focusing on their policies. Rossing sees this tendency as a sign that roasting targets the public as well. By keeping jokes simple and without true political depth, the comedians create an implicit criticism that is directed to the audiences. It is a way to point out the lack of civil engagement and interest in the entertainment. (Rossing, 2017, pp. 178-179). Rossing's argument seems relevant when we look at Wolf's reaction to the criticism. She has refused to apologize or explain her chosen style and jokes, but she responded to this joke by asking, "Why are you guys making this about Sarah's looks? I said she burns facts and uses the ash to create a 'perfect' smoky eye. I complimented her eye makeup and her ingenuity of materials." (Wolf, 2018, April 29.) With this argument, Wolf hints that part of the audience has failed to see the political criticism under the surface. Several tweets that defended Wolf raised a similar argument. They argued that the joke was misunderstood to be about appearance, whereas it targeted dishonesty.

Additionally, the defenders reminded others that during her monologue Wolf made a joke about former governor Chris Christie's weight ("it's like shooting fish into Chris Christie") and Mitch McConnell ("He's finally getting his neck circumcised"), and she also joked about her own looks ("It's like if my name was Michelle Jokes Frizzy Hair Small Titties"). (Wolf, 2018, April 28.) None of these caused similar controversy, because making fun of male politicians' appearances and women comedians' use of self-deprecating humor are established cultural practices (e.g. Rossing, 2017; Gilbert, 2004). The failure to recognize the double standards about how and when it is culturally acceptable to joke about appearances as part of comedy is a sign of existing gendered comedy practices, because it shows how women continue to be misunderstood as the audience misses the ironic context around it (e.g. Colletta, 2014, p. 209). Defenders of Wolf argued that others were (purposefully) misunderstanding the joke simply to avoid discussing the bigger problem - Sanders' press conferences.

The people supporting Wolf's performance raised the issue of hypocrisy in addition to misunderstanding. The most typical response was to (at least partially) agree that it is not good taste to joke about women's (or other culturally marginal groups') appearances, but instead of blaming Wolf they turned to Trump and his supporters. They brought up that Trump has said the same, and even more and worse things, about women as Wolf did, and also, when Michelle Obama was the First Lady, several conservatives went after her looks.

Thus, if these actions could be explained away as jokes, why is it now a problem when a comedian makes similar jokes?

The nature of the roast typically raises such questions among audiences as how far a comedian takes the roasting, and how well the target takes the jokes. For example, in the WHCA dinner the President's ability to take a joke is considered a sign to accept the offered communicative relationship between the President and the audience (Waisanen, 2015, p. 353). In Wolf's case, it seems that because both the comedian and the targets were women, the limits on what is acceptable were tight due to the gendered readings of the situation. This shows that post-gender comedy still faces challenges regarding its reception. Some people, who argued that the hypocritical message behind this debate is that "women cannot take a joke," or that "ladies are somehow more breakable than gentlemen", also recognized these challenges.

Some, although a minority, argued that Wolf did not do a disservice to other women; instead, she was holding the women in power to the same accountability as men in power. People tweeted, for example, "She went after the women with actual power", and "That is as insightful, fresh & original a critique (& of course therefore controversial) of the alt right women as I have seen." In these arguments, Wolf's jokes were seen as a good and necessary criticism. In a way, these tweets became arguments against the gendered reading of comedy, because they wanted all female comedians and politicians be treated equally to men without receiving gendered treatment. In a way, by making gender a clear aspect of her routine, Wolf is making interesting claims. She is being aggressive and talking to power, but she is also holding women as much, or even more, responsible for abusing power. Thus, although she states her starting point as a woman strongly, she is still somewhat post-gender positioned. She ensures that comedy can be social criticism.

Within the field of political comedy, Rossing (2017, pp. 169-170, 181) argues that the WHCA roast plays a role in American democracy, and continues that the aim is to make the democratic system (including its administration, political system, media, and audiences) more functional by criticizing its failures in a setting which celebrates this same system. Wolf's monologue brought forward several tensions within the system, where bipartisan reactions mixed with liberal-conservative gender values and politics. Conservatives, here, represented themselves as defending women's honor, and liberals wanted to hold all genders

accountable for their actions. Thus, the gender of the comedian and the gender of those she roasted became one important theme in the aftermath, proving the power of popular culture to make visible the shifts in cultural values and attitudes. The debate also showed that comedy still works within gender categories, and gender can also work as a powerful tool for content in comedy.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I examined three different dimensions of Michelle Wolf's roast at the White House Correspondents' dinner (2018) – the role of a (female) comedian, style of roasting, and content of comedy. Based on these three dimensions, the possibility for post-gender comedy is challenging. First, if post-gender is understood to refer to sex/gender categories, contemporary political comedy remains far from any post-gender ideals. Comedians and their audiences continue to recognize gender as an important identity category, and also a possible source of comedic content. In this strict definition, post-gender comedy might not also be hoped for, at least now.

However, a broader understanding of the concept that would look into cultural practices and gender hierarchies instead of gender categories, brings up interesting notions. It has been suggested that in order to perform comedy as a woman, one needs to step outside their gender (Russell, 2002). However, I argue that post-gender would not require any comedian of any gender to step outside their social identity unless they want to. Instead, post-gender could mean diminishing the assumed cultural hierarchies about gender. The aggressive style of roasting, and often political comedy in general, is starting to widen its boundaries. The assumption that political comedy and aggressive humor is a male space is being challenged both by comedians and by part of the audience. Here, the shift is taking place within the hierarchical positioning of genders, and thus, post-gender comedy could be a way to remove these hierarchies while continuing to recognize gender as a social identity.

The question of reception will remain for some time, because cultural expectations about women and men, comedy, and politics do not change overnight. The Twitter debate about Wolf's monologue at HCAS shows that although there was a strong negative response to her performance, there were also comments that acknowledged and expressed the desire to open

up gender expectations when it comes to political comedy. Thus, whereas comedians can bring post-gender practices into their style and jokes, the possibilities for post-gender comedy as a cultural practice is also finding audiences. It opens up possibilities where “women’s comedy” and “men’s comedy” are losing their hierarchical positioning.

REFERENCES

- Boosler, E. (1993, May 1). White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. *CSPAN*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from www.c-span.org/
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Colletta, L. (2014). Postmodernity and the Gendered Uses of Political Satire. In D. Solomon, S. Zwagerman, P.M. St. Pierre, P. Dickinson & A. Higgins (Eds.), *Women and Comedy: History, Theory, Practice* (pp. 207-218). Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- CNN (2018, April 29). WHCA president defends Michelle Wolf's jokes. *Reliable Sources*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II553BMJ3sI>
- Colbert, S. (2006, April 29). White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. *CSPAN*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from www.c-span.org/
- Deutscher, P. (1997). *Yielding Gender: Feminism, Deconstruction and the History of Philosophy*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Dodds, K. & Kirby, P. (2013). It's Not a Laughing Matter: Critical Geopolitics, Humour and Unlaughter. *Geopolitics*, 18:1, 45-59. doi: 10.1080/14650045.2012.668723
- Foy, Jennifer (2015) “Fooling Around: Female Stand-Ups and Sexual Joking,” *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 48(4), 703-713.
- Fox News (2009, May 11). Did Wanda Sykes Go Too Far at the White House Correspondents' Dinner? *On the Record*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2009/05/12/did-wanda-sykes-go-too-far-at-white-house-correspondents-dinner.html>
- Geier, T. (2018, April 29). Michelle Wolf’s “Unnecessarily Cruel” White House Correspondents’ Dinner Act Ripped – by Media. *The Wrap*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://www.thewrap.com/michelle-wolf-white-house-correspondents-dinner-ripped-by-media/>

- Gilbert, J.R. (2004). *Performing Marginality: Humor, Gender, and Cultural Critique*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Graban, T. S. (2014). Humoring the Femal Pol: Irony, Consciousness-Raising, and “Third-Culture” Discourse. In D. Solomon, S. Zwagerman, P.M. St. Pierre, P. Dickinson & A. Higgins (Eds.), *Women and Comedy: History, Theory, Practice* (pp. 157-170). Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- Griffiths, B. D. & Calderone, M. (2018, April 29). Journalists distance themselves from Correspondents’ Dinner after Wolf routine. *Politico*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/04/29/wolf-correspondents-dinner-journalists-559292>
- Haraway, D. (1991). A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. In *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (pp. 149-181). New York; Routledge.
- Johnson, T. (2015, April 20). “SNL’s” Cecily Strong Promises Hard Laughs at White House Correspondents Dinner. *Variety*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://variety.com/2015/biz/news/cecily-strong-white-house-correspondents-association-dinner-1201474952/>
- Joseph, R. L. (2009). “Tyra Banks Is Fat”: Reading (Post-)Racism and (Post-)Feminism in the New Millennium. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 26(3), 237-254. doi: 10.1080/15295030903015096
- Kahn, M. (2015, April 27). An Oral History of the White House Correspondents' Dinner by the (Few) Women Who've Owned it. *Elle*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://www.elle.com/culture/career-politics/a28033/an-oral-history-of-the-white-house-correspondents-dinner-by-the-women-whove-owned-it/>
- Lavin, S. (2004). *Women and Comedy in Solo Performance: Phyllis Diller, Lily Tomlin and Roseanne*. Studies in American Popular History and Culture. New York & London: Routledge.
- Lightman, D. (2013, July 20). Helen Thomas opened White House press corps to women. *McClatchy Washington Bureau*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/white-house/article24751321.html>
- Lutes, J. M. (2006). *Front Page Girls: Women Journalists in American Culture and Fiction, 1880-1930*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press.
- Meyers, S. (2011, April 30). White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. *CSPAN*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from www.c-span.org/

- Mizejewski, L. (2014). *Pretty/Funny: Women Comedians and Body Politics*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Nicholas, L. (2014). *Queer Post-Gender Ethics: The Shape of Selves to Come*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Parsons, C. & Condon G. (2018). An Evolutionary Portrait. *White House Correspondence Association*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <http://whca.net/about/history/>
- Rahman, R. (2015, April 23). Cecily Strong talks hosting the White House Correspondents' Dinner, "SNL," and dad jokes. *Entertainment*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <http://ew.com/article/2015/04/23/cecily-strong-white-house-correspondents-dinner-2/>
- Ritchie, C. (2014). "Taking the piss": mockery as a form of comic communication. *Comedy Studies*, 5(1), 33-40. doi: 10.1080/2040610X.2014.918809
- Rossing, J. P. (2017). Live from DC, It's "Nerd Prom". Political Humor at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. In M. R. Meier & C. R. Schmitt (Eds.), *Stand-Up Comedy and the Rhetoric of Social Change* (pp. 168-184). New York & London: Routledge.
- Russell, D. (2002). Self-deprecatory Humour and the Female Comic: Self-destruction or Comedic Construction? *Thirdspace: a journal of feminist theory & culture*, 2(1). Retrieved July 5, 2018, from http://journals.sfu.ca/thirdspace/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/d_russell/68
- Sherine, A. (2016, August 25). The reason why women aren't often funny. *The Spectator*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2016/08/reason-women-arent-often-funny/>
- Shouse, E. & Oppliger, P. (2012). Sarah is magic: The (post-gendered?) comedy of Sarah Silverman. *Comedy Studies*, 3(2), 201-216.
- Strong, C. (2015, April 25). White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. *CSPAN*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from www.c-span.org/
- Sykes, W. (2009, May 9). White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. *CSPAN*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from www.c-span.org/
- Waisanen, D. (2015). Comedian-in-Chief: Presidential Jokes as Enthymematic Crisis Rhetoric. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 45, 2 (June), 335-360.
- WHCA (2018, April 29). #WHCA Statement to Members of Annual Dinner. *Twitter*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://twitter.com/whca/status/990773612226412545?lang=en>

- Zwagerman, S. (2014). A Cautionary Tale: Ann Coulter and the Failure of Humor. In D. Solomon, S. Zwagerman, P.M. St. Pierre, P. Dickinson & A. Higgins (Eds.), *Women and Comedy: History, Theory, Practice* (pp. 171-184). Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- Wolf, M. (2018, April 28). White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. *CSPAN*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from www.c-span.org/
- Wolf, M. (2018, April 29). Why are you guys making this about Sarah's looks? I said she burns facts and uses the ash to create a "perfect" smoky eye. I complimented her eye makeup and her ingenuity of materials. *Twitter*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from <https://twitter.com/michelleisawolf/status/990610206425042946?lang=en>

3. What we Talk About when we Talk About Humor. An Extensive Approach to the Phenomenon of Political Humor

The actual development of Discourse Studies has awakened a new interest in the research of those phenomena related to laugh, by the emergence of new tools that allow a global approach to the topic, by the appreciation that its influence in other discourses (political, scientific, artistic, media) cannot be denied, or by the fact that laughable (as I call it) is actually the counterpoint and necessary shadow of all that claims to be serious. To understand the laughter and ludicrous discourses as a fundamental dimension of social life is one of the first steps towards a more comprehensible theory of the subject. On the other hand, discursive perspective allows to renew the reflections on the phenomena of laughter, since it helps us to think humour and comic within a theory of meaning in which language is not a merely transparent representation of the world and the subject is not external to it.

Within this framework, we will try to postulate a general theory of humor and the comical taking the more interesting approaches from those thinkers and scholars that have dealt with the subject in the last two centuries. Since Aristotle who, 2.500 years ago announced a second book of his *Poetics* that did not manage to see the light of the Renaissance, the study of the humor, the comical, the laughter and the comedy has occupied a very perplex place in the field of the Human Sciences³³. Every self-respecting philosopher has dedicated it some

³³ I refer, of course, to the lost second book of Aristotle's *Poetics* in which according to what the philosopher announces in the first that he would deal with comedy later. This happens precisely during this excerpt about tragedy: "(...) with the representation of life in hexameter verse and with comedy we will deal later" (1449b).

pages (from Kant to Nietzsche, passing through Hobbes, Kierkegaard, Hegel and Schopenhauer) but always, with a few honourable exceptions, incidentally, in contrast with the attention that has received, for instance, tragedy or the feeling of the tragic. On the other hand, and this is much more important, every thinker or scholar that decides to undertake the task starts from zero, without giving due consideration to terminology, a crucial point in this case. It is impossible to know if we agree or not with the point of view of this or that author about parody if we do not know, in principle, what he understands by parody.

In the following pages I will try to expose the status of my research on the subject. It is important to explain, however, that these results belong to a research still in progress and, on the other hand, reflect conclusions obtained from very diverse research lines. I will not go back to Plato's *Filebo* and the generations of its descendants as usually do most of the scholars. Instead, I will confine myself to a few names indispensable to follow the arguments³⁴. In the meantime, and before starting, it should be good to clear up that the plural of the title is a little bit excessive and responds to the immoderate wish of its author than to reality principle. The following, therefore, seeks to clarify, plainly and simply, what I talk about when I talk about humor.

1.

I start by separating those discourses (as comedy, cartoons, stand-up comedy monologues) whose main focus is laughter and the feeling of laughable, from its circumstantial use in other discourses with a serious background³⁵. Joke, for instance, it is a genre itself, but its concision and frequency made it ideal to insert in other genre's texts. A politician, a doctor,

Aristotle also mentioned the book on his *Rhetoric* "the ridiculous has been discussed separately in the *Poetics*" (1372a). As everyone knows, this second book is lost and heated discussions have been made about the reality of its existence. Umberto Eco has notoriously explored the subject in his best seller *The Name of the Rose*. It is really meaningful that the lost part has been that which deals with laughter. Mostly, considering that the philosopher had denounced in the text that arrived to us the little unfairly attention paid to the Comedy by his predecessors and proposed to rectify that lack.

34 Edmund Bergler on his *Laughter and the sense of Humor* (1956) lists at this time more than eighty different theories about humor and its species. A history of the successive failures of the Human being at the attempt to define and to grab the laugh can be founded on Minois 2000. On Palacios 2014 I succumb to the temptation of make my own list.

35 This is a not so obvious asymmetry between the laughable and the feeling of tragic that in principle, does not seem to have this possibility of been developed into discourses from which it is not the main focus. There is no tragic equivalent of mockery and joke. On the other hand, they seem to have reversed paths. While laughter seems to come from within the social life and from there moves to all the artistic languages, that re-creates this very particular social feeling; tragic is originally produced in the aesthetic sphere. As always, it is necessary to reveal what I am talking about when I am talking about tragic, discussion that exceeds the possibilities of a foot note. It is enough to clarify that I exclude from the domain of tragic the daily and present use of the word.

a lawyer could make jokes but this does not make them comedians. I will call the first Ludicrous Discourses.

It should be made clear that our notion of discourse is not limited to linguistic discourses but extends to any semiotic mode that has the quality of meaning something. Discourse will be, therefore, the materialization of meaning, here and now, in terms of time and space. On the other hand, when we talk about Discourses with a capital D followed by a relational adjective we postulate the existence of one specific social field in which we can include a particular group of discourses, such as when we speak of Philosophical Discourses, Medical, Political, etc.

Ludicrous Discourses are part of a very frequent social field (Possenti 2010) related to the professional productions of texts (not only linguistic texts, all kind of texts) intended to make laugh. Comics and humourists such as comic writers, musicians, stand-up comedians, cartoonists, clowns, screen writers, buffoons recognize each other as a part of a group and are recognized by a society that accepts them. In *De Oratore*, for instance, Cicero seeks to distinguish between the orator that appeals to the persuasive potential of laugh for specific purpose from those buffoons that jest all day for no apparent reason (except the reason to earn their living, but Cicero does not say that). With the emergency of the first street newspapers and leaflets a new process of professionalization of laughter is started, specifically circumscribed to the mass media, as the other side of what will be consumed as news.

A second distinction useful for our purpose is the one that can be made between production and recognition of comic and humour, since it is very common to laugh about things and facts that do not have composed with this intention. A discourse created as serious may result in a guffaw as time and contexts go by. Or in the opposite, the audience may not find a joke funny. Most of the psychological and philosophical approaches to the problem of laughable are founded on those behavior and blunders that made us laugh, and they are not produced as comical.

Differences that rise in the circulation of meaning between production and recognition of laughable (and any other text) can be adjusted, however, appealing to a series of process

more or less stables that discourse studies group together under the name of apparatus³⁶. The notion of apparatus is very useful to understand why certain texts which push to the limits the subtleness of their laughable proceedings are still comprehended by a mayor public. It is the case of Todd Solonz, Wes Anderson and the Cohen brothers' films. Comic and humour are not only production machines but also reader devices.

2.

It is evident that a general theory of comic and humor have to reveal what is common to the Ludicrous Discourses as well as to the occasional joke of the dentist. What is behind the resounding fall of a lady in the middle of the street and the complete works of Rabelais. And it is beyond doubt that a global approach to the subject cannot be limited to those discourses that causes the immediate effect of the guffaw. Laughable is not only what makes you laugh, but a particular mode to say (or to draw or act); but also the operations of reading that allow to understand and recognize a certain discourse as laughable (non-serious) whatever has been the intention (if there ever was one) of the producer of that discourse. A joke could leave the audience indifferent, even if the audience recognize it as a joke (a very bad one, apparently).

In short, we say the same thing that Aristotle, in the first place, and then Quintilianus and Cicero, when they affirm that the domain of laughable includes a physical deformity or a moral ugliness that the orator found in another thing or person. With the exception that this physical deformity and moral ugliness does not pre-exist to the discourse that makes laugh of it. The laughable is built over the space of non-thinkable, the non-speakable, but in a circular movement, it contributes to create it, to give it a place.

To understand the laughable requires, therefore, to know before what is the seriousness, its inverse. In the words of William Hazlitt:

36 The notion of apparatus focuses on the existence of certain regularities in certain discourses (rules, norms, laws, etc.) that allows to manage the contact between instances, for example between instances of production and recognition (Aumont 1997; Traversa 1995). See specially Foucault 1980 [1977] and Agamben 2009.

The serious is the habitual stress which the mind lays upon the expectation of a given order of events, following one another with a certain regularity and weight of interest attached to them (Hazlitt 1907: 6)³⁷.

The Oxford Dictionary (in coincidence with the Spanish D.R.A.E.) affirms that serious is “acting or speaking sincerely and in earnest, rather than in a joking or half-hearted manner”, that is, what is guaranteed by everyone that asserts to speak “seriously” in a conversation. Serious is, therefore, what excludes ambiguity, polysemy, misunderstanding, what gives stability to the meaning, the usual state of things. The deliberate displacement of the serious mode of discourse, following certain proceedings more or less established that allows the receptor to recognize that this displacement is intentional, is what we call laughable. Or, in the same meaning, the operations of reading that gives to some texts the state of non-serious. Ludicrous Discourse will be, therefore, those discourses produced with the explicitly and consciously intention to turning away from what we consider serious in a given social context. It is time to demarcate the different ways in which this displacement can be made.

3.

The reader will note that I referred frequently to the comic and humor as different things. This distinction is one of the crucial points of this work and one of the most common mistakes in which the specialists usually incur. The distinction between comic and humour and the passionate defence of its relevance has a long history that starts with the advent of modernity and reaches its peak in the first years of the last century.

Bakhtin (2009 [1965]) or Freud (1990 [1905]; 1961 [1927]), for instance, say that humor is a particular species in the general domain of the comical. Peter Berger, lately, claims that comic “is the objective correlate of humor, the subjective capacity” (Berger 1997: 11). For his part, Attardo (1994) gives no sense to the distinction. On his *On Humor* Pirandello (1960 [1908]) adopt the opposite stance.

³⁷ Hazlitt continues: “When this stress is increased beyond its usual pitch of intensity, so as to overstrain the feelings by the violent opposition of good to bad, or of objects to our desires, it becomes the pathetic or tragical. The ludicrous, or comic, is the unexpected loosening or relaxing this stress below its usual pitch of intensity, by such an abrupt transposition of the order of our ideas, as taking the mind unawares, throws it off its guard, startles it into a lively sense of pleasure, and leaves no time nor inclination for painful reflections” (Hazlitt 1907: 6).

A good way to argument for the difference between comic and humor is to resort to the three theories of humour that appear repeatedly in contemporary academic literature:

1 – Incongruity theory

2 – Superiority theory

3 – Relief Theory

The authors of the first group stand that laugh arouses from the perception of some sort of incongruence that infringes our mental patterns and expectations (Attardo 1994, 47-49; Morreal 2013, 1987: 45-64). Although this kind of theories are the most accepted it has been noted that the perception of incongruence is not sufficient (or even necessary) condition to unleash laughter, since when our expectations are broken we can also experiment other feelings such as fear, rage or anxiety.

Authors of the second group, for its part, consider that the pleasure of laughter emerges from a feeling of superiority from other things or persons. This idea can be already found in Plato and Aristotle and shows up in the works of Descartes, Hobbes and, at the beginning of the twentieth century, in Bergson and Freud. On the same plane we can locate the tradition of *castigat ridendo mores* ingrained in the Comedy of Art that confers to the comic the function of condemning social vices and improper behavior and, therefore, the possibility of its repression and correction.

In respect of the third group of theories, it claims that the pleasure of laughing comes from the relief of certain psychic tensions or from the release of inhibitions, laws and social conventions. The first author in proposing such an explanation was Lord Shaftesbury on his essay from 1709 “*Sensus communis; an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor*” (Shaftesbury 1999 [1709]). The theory of comic and humour as relief will be picked up two centuries later by Herbert Spencer on “The Physiology of Laughter” (1860) and by Sigmund Freud. The work of Mikhail Bakhtin on the popular culture of laughter in the renaissance can also be interpreted as social sublimation of imposed values of the official culture.

It is possible then to distinguish humor and comic taking as departing point these three different approaches. When we consider theories focused on incongruity, for instance, we

can see how comical discourses deliberately violate or break some cultural rule or social value as long as this rule is presupposed to the extent that it is regarded as inviolable. The comic gives license to violate the rule. But it gives such license precisely to those who have so absorbed the rule that they also presume it is inviolable. Thus what appears as a moment of liberation is actually a reinforcement of the existing order. The incongruity of the comic, therefore, is built on a foundation of well supported normativity (Eco 1998). Nonsense (some sort of nonsense) departs in general from well constructed logical systems. So, it is easy to play breaking the logical rules in such a context. Nonsense becomes a pedagogical gender in the measure that logic reach the triumph in the end.

Conversely, humor takes the opposite way. It departs from an apparent observance in order to demonstrate that there are no rules, no normativity. Such is the case when the sad administrative clerk of Chekov's "The Death of a Civil Servant" tries to excuse himself beyond the edge making his hierarchical superior hair stands on end; or when the lively author of the Jonathan Swift's letter "A Modest Proposal" suggests to ease the economic troubles of the impoverished Irish by selling their children as food for rich people. It is not, therefore, the violation of a given rule over a background of observance (the apparent destruction of an order) but the exasperation of this same order over a background of nothing. So much so, that commonly humourists make the fun closing the possible meanings with which a generous soul could change his intentions trying to explain what is tended to remain incomprehensible. This is the case of the "joke" included by Laurence Sterne on the twelfth chapter of the *Tristram Shandy* which serves as epigraph of this work.

4.

Something similar happens with the second line of theories. The comic laughs always about misfortunes of others because these misfortunes assert the subject superiority on the background of shortcomings of others. The humourist, otherwise, laughs about his own misfortunes, about what put limits to his own subjective condition. It is well known Freud's joke on the prisoner that, being led to execution early on a Monday, says, "Well, the week's beginning nicely!". The feeling of superiority is turned here on the proper subject of enunciation. Humor allows the poor prisoner to avoid the tragic consequences of his destiny. He refuses to be distressed by the provocations of reality, he insists that he cannot be

compelled to suffer, that traumas are no more than occasions to gain pleasure. “It signifies not only the triumph of the ego but also of the pleasure principle, which is able here to assert itself against the unkindness of the real circumstances” (Freud 1961 [1927]: 163).

The main thing is the intention which humour carries out, whether it is acting in relation to the self or other people. It means: “Look! Here is the world, which seems so dangerous! It is nothing but a game for children—just worth making a jest about!” [...] Furthermore, not everyone is capable of the humorous attitude. It is a rare and precious gift (Freud 1961 [1927]: 166).

It is necessary, however, to transpose what Freud says about one person in the domain of language, to the field of a text that can be an image, a magazine, or a film produced by a group. Besides, if we want to keep Freud’s theory of humour, the traumatic condition of an individual should be translated to the traumatic condition of a whole discursive community. The first objection is easily resolved if we accept that any kind of text, pictures, films, musical themes, comic books, magazines, may have a particular *ethos* or image of author that we attach or not to a certain proper name, independently of its real sender. So we talk about the Woody Allen movies or the Seinfeld TV show, despite the fact that they are made by a multiplicity of individuals.

About the second objection, it must be acknowledged that death and violence are being seen in practically all cultures as biggest traumata (in that sense, gallows humor is the paradigmatic case of humor). But we can also find other community catastrophes, as well as cognitive catastrophes, for instance, or even representational. So, the called absurd humour is founded over the failure of language and reason to understand and apprehend the world. Most of Steinberg’s cartoons appeals to the limits of pictorial representation by creating images in which incongruence cannot be solved (Figure 1). Todd Solondz movies, already mentioned, take fiercely delight in the inability of its characters to constitute affective relationships (inability that we assume as proper).

5.

Finally, the so called relief theories claim that pleasure of laughter emerges from a sense of relief or sublimation that could be individual (Freud) or social (Bakhtin). The laughable as a sort of revenge against the world.

We said about humor that it overcomes traumas by a gesture of ingenuity. And, in the case of what we call humoristic discourses, it seems like the enunciator takes pleasure by indicating them explicitly. Comic, for its part, punish other people's mistakes through the more or less cruel mockery of their excesses. As Lucian Gregory, the anarchistic poet of Gilbert Keith Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday*, it claims to be the defender of a law from which its target has been diverted. Thus, comic believes in the law and believes that the one who does not respect it deserves to be sanctioned. From there Freud's intimate conviction of humour, unlike the comic, is not resigned but rebellious. The comic, on returning for check the rule, gives to that rule a status that the humour denies.

Comic sublimation is, therefore, false unlike the true sublimation of humor. Humor gains pleasure from which should be assumed as a defeat. Does not deny the violence of the world. It assumes and mocks it. Comic is resigned because accepts its own impotence against the world. It lets itself be led by its rules, denouncing to whom do not comply them. On the contrary, humor makes ostensible what is destined to destroy the subject of enunciation and by this gesture, allows it to emerge victorious. Comic revenge is a false revenge, since the existing order remains strong.

Thus we will call comic that movement that alters the established parameters, but always with the condition of returning to a previous order. We will call humor the opposite travel. Between them, orbiting between the contempt of the mundane and the disturbing greatness of the sublime, that mysterious underlying dimension of our culture raises: the laughable.

6.

To conclude, we must recognize that the distinction between those two modalities of the ridiculous would be pointless if we do not admit the probable dialectic between one and the

other. A text produced as humoristic can be read as comic and vice versa. The radical undecidability of the humoristic can be neutralized by the critic assimilating the ridiculous absolute to any political or subversive will. The humourist is the one from whom we never know very well what he wants to say and his expertise consists in maintaining the irreducibility of his discourse as long as possible. Nevertheless, we always give meaning to what is said. It is fatal that it be that way.

On the other hand, the more complex comic, the intolerant or xenophobic comic, can be changed into humor by directing the laugh to the mock itself, to the terrible capacity of human beings to hurt their peers by laughter. We laugh not of the joke but of the fact that the joke can be told by someone.

We summarize our propositions on the differences between comic and humour in figure 1.

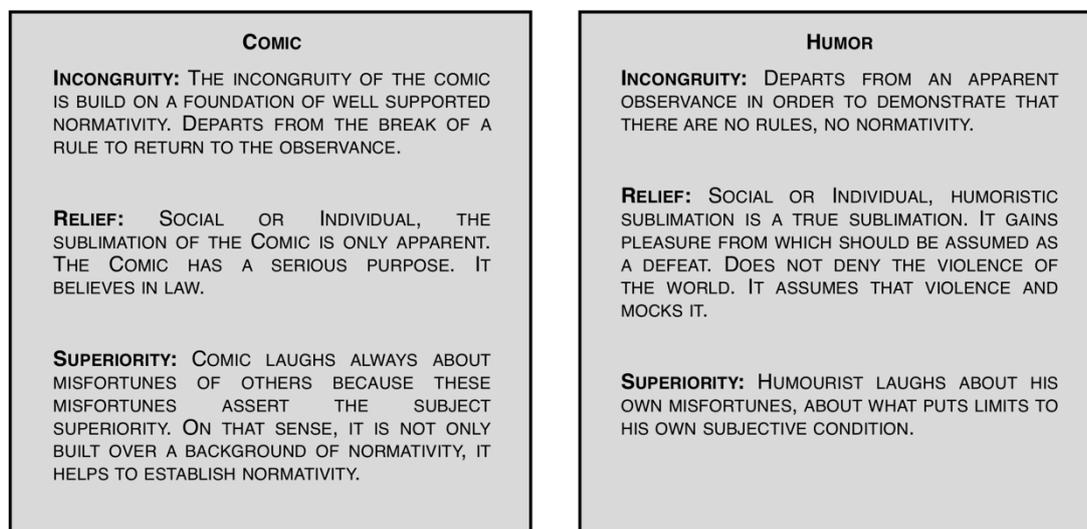


Figure 1

The passage from humor to comic it is also the difference between the construction of certain image of the author which we do not know very well what he deeply wants to say to another kind of author compromised with the reality of his time. According to our point of view it is impossible to deeply understand the political significance of humoristic discourses without understand the differences between what we call *humor* and its opposite, the *comical*; both modes of what we have denominate the *laughable*, that is, the propriety of some discourses of of being differentiated to the ones considered serious in a given society.

While the comical founds the universe of representations that we use to build the reality; the humoristic, on the other hand, dismantles it, given that, recognizing the adversity of the world that surrounds us, it prevails over the circumstances through ingenuity. Or, for the opposite, through a funny remark free from pathos, it marks everything that in the universe of men can be perceived as a trauma: the death, the absurd of reality, reality itself, the real, giving up at any point of predetermination and anchoring. If comical can be used as a political instrument, in order to fight against dominance discourse or, on the other hand, in order to preserve pre-existing conditions, humor can't be used in either meanings, and that is its real political implication.

What we usually call Political Humor is, therefore, comical. Political humorists speak always in the name of certain normativity that politicians do not respect. Comical is not more or less progressive. It depends on the ideological background of the humorist. And, of course, the humorist contributes with his discourse to build this ideological background. What we call common sense is, as Umberto Eco used to say, the least common of all senses. But comical has a wonderful ability to make this kind of sense common. Humor, on the other hand, works on the basis that no sense is common, there are not such thing as a common sense. Politicians are stupid, but so is the electorate and the humorist himself. Unlike the comical subject, the humoristic one presents itself as someone whose intentions are not known, someone unapproachable, hard to pin down. And all his efforts are destined to conserve this unique and rarely position from which any sense can emerge.

That is, I believe, the authentic philosophical laugh that underlies the production of all meaning authentically new.

REFERENCES

- Agamben, G. (2009). *What is an apparatus? And other essays*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Aristotle (1997). *Poetics*. London: Penguin classics.
- Aristotle (1997). *The art of rethoric*. London: Penguin classics.
- Attardo, S. (1994). *Linguistic Theories of Humor*. Mouton de Gruyter: New York.
- Aumont, J. (1997). *The image*. London: British Film Institute.

- Bakhtin, M. (2009 [1965]). *Rabelais and his world*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Bergler, E. (1956). *Laughter and the sense of Humor*. New York: Intercontinental Medical Book.
- Cicero (2001). *On the ideal orator*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eco, U. (1998). "The Comic and the Rule." *Faith in Fakes*. London: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1980 [1977]). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. USA: Random House.
- Freud, S. (1990 [1905]). *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*. London: W. W. Norton & Company and The Standard edition.
- Freud, S. (1961 [1927]). *Humor. The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents and Other Works, Standard Edition. Vol. 21*. London: The Hogarth Press.
- Hazlitt, W. (1907). *On wit and humour*. En *Lectures on the English comic writers*. Londres: Oxford University Press.
- Minois, G. (2000). *Histoire du rire et de la dérision*. París: Fayard.
- Morreal, J. (2013). Philosophy of Humor. En Zalta, E. N. (2013). *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), Stanford: Stanford University.
[\[http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/humor/\]](http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/humor/)
- Palacios, C. (2014). *El discurso humorístico. Aproximaciones al estudio del humor y lo cómico*. Buenos Aires: RGC Libros.
- Pirandello, Luigi, 1960 [1908]. *On Humor*. North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press.
- Possenti, S. (2010). *Humor, língua e discurso*. San Pablo: Contexto.
- Shaftesbury, A. (1999 [1709]). *Sensus communis; an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor*. En *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spencer, H. (1860). "The Physiology of Laughter" En *Macmillan's Magazine*, marzo de 1860.
- Sterne, L. (2009). *Life and opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. Oxford: Oxford World's Classic.
- Traversa, O. (1995). "Carmen, la de las transposiciones". En Revista *La piel de la obra*, Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, USA.

Hüseyin ÇAVUŞOĞLU

Bülent Ecevit University Political Science and Public Administration,

huseyindp@yahoo.com

Özcan SEZER

Bülent Ecevit University Political Science and Public Administration

ozcansezer67@yahoo.com

Tuğçe BAYRAM

Süleyman Demirel University, Social Science Institute,

tugcebayram06@hotmail.com

4. The place of political humor in Turkish political culture: democratic party period (1950-1960)

Introduction

Humor, a social phenomenon, reflects the values of society, the moral level of society, the political, socio-economic status of society, and the weaknesses of society. Therefore, a culture of humor that is appropriate for the structure of every society is formed. Since humor has a national character, when it is translated into another language, its influence diminishes significantly. It is very difficult to draw the boundaries of humor in conceptual terms. The sense of humor is personal, but the humor itself is a social phenomenon. Although its structure is universal, humor varies from culture to culture, from society to society, from region to region, from situation to situation. In other words, humor, varies from time to time, from region to region, from age to age. Humor occurs as a result of interaction within the group. The humor that emerges as a result of the interaction improves

the communication between the individuals forming a group and brings them closer together. The feature that distinguishes humor from other species is incoherence between the idea and what is said. It can be stated that the real element in humor is indirectly expressed (Göker, 1993: 35). Humor occurs in the direction of a cause and a goal. Humor comes to an end when the reason or target is raised from the center. Humor is used even in literature, art, education, culture and health.

Humor has attracted many scholars, especially in philosophy, literature, psychology, sociology.

Humor reflects the voice of the community. The wishes of the people, their complaints, their troubles are processed by humor. The most important characteristic of humor is that it can reach a large audience of readers. Almost all humorists criticized political power. Political humor is one of the most popular forms of oppositional humor in the Turkish humor tradition.

The aim of the work is to reveal the place of political humor in the Turkish political culture during the Democratic Party's rule (1950-1960). In this context, first of all, the concept of humor, humor theories (Superiority theory, Conflict theory, Relaxation theory) were examined in detail and then the development of the Democratic Party period was examined as a period of rise, pause and collapse. In the last part, the understanding of political humor in DP period was given in detail. It is possible to encounter humor in every period of Turkish political life. By understanding the development of humor, the power of criticism and the domain of influence created by this force, the influence of humor on politics is understandable (Türk, 2015: 1).

1. Humor Concept

Many concepts in social sciences have no common definition. One of these concepts is humor. The reason for this is that humor comes from being fed from society and it has a lot of functions. Humor comes from the historical and social background of each country (Cevizci, 2002: 34). When the definitions of humor are examined, it is seen that the elements like amusement, laughter, thoughtfulness and a good time are shared as the common denominator (Türk, 2015: 4). Nonetheless, humor has a critical and destructive function. Humor has become an important tool used in every period, even though there is no

definition that is valid for every period, covering all periods from the ancient times to the present day. When the general lines are taken into consideration, humor is an art that makes people think, entertains, and makes them laugh. This art emerges by using the funny, unusual, contrasting aspects of events. It can be stated that the humor is inconsistent on the basis of the fact that it emerges from the conflict between reality and necessity. Humor is nurtured by the society and lies on the basis of social distortions. These distortions are revealed with happiness and sadness (Cevizci, 2002: 34).

Humor is in interaction with the political, socio-cultural structure, and it is an important discipline with its theories, types, and functions. Humor deals with the values of society, and the political, socio-economic situation. In short, it deals with all the aspects of society (Kamiloğlu, 2013: 166). The basic functions of humor include recreation, criticism, attrition, objection, opposition, protest, rebellion, socialization, aggression, defense, reduction of tension in society and attention. Humor is a discipline whose functionality is frontal because of the nature and abundance of its functions (Eker, 2009 (a): 29-30). The concept of laughter is an indispensable part of the discipline of humor. Recent studies reveal that it is not possible to distinguish between laughter and humor. As Aristotle puts it, laughter is a characteristic of all human beings and is the most important spiritual feature of human being. (Bakhtin, 2001: 89).

Freud, Bergson, Hegel, are scientists who have studied the concept of humor and emphasize that humor is a rationally irrational transition (Cebeci, 2008: 20). According to A. Einstein, humor is a smiley idea. Humor is everything written to make you laugh (Millspaugh, Et al., 1979: 2644). According to Aristotle, Plato and Hobbes, humor is a tool and people use it in their own struggle for superiority. The purpose here is to lower the individual in the eyes of the people (Tarnavska, 2010: 19). According to Aristotle, humor is the effect of a sense of victory that suddenly warns us when we see someone else's humiliation, or that we remember our inferiority in our past, and that we perceive superiority in ourselves (Tarnavska, 2010: 19). Since humor is defined in terms of purpose, utility, and property, it can be said that the definition of humor is diversity (Millspaugh, Et al., 1979: 2644). Despite differences in the definition of humor, the common point is the character of humor. In this character, there is a sense of opposition, siding with the oppressed, and mockery. It can be said that the sense of humor is so meaningful that it is used as a humor figure in almost every area of life (Kamiloğlu, 2014: 6-7).

Humor is the essence of all feelings and thoughts. Humor is a method, a strategy, a feeling (Kamiloğlu, 2014: 7). Humor is a multidimensional phenomenon that embraces both physiological and psychological concepts (Kamiloğlu, 2014: 9). The real eyes are laid out with humor. There is a stance against humor. What is opposed in humor is both the people and the institutions that are against the well-being of man (Aksoy, 2015: 25). It is important to be able to approach every topic with humor and to contribute the environment of tolerance rooted in the democratic system. Through humor, different mindsets are freely spoken, discussed, and questioned (Tural, 2017: 61). The goal of political humor is to become critical of politics and to loosen its grip on society. Humor works on the issues that displease the society. Humor is an element that allows the individual to have a tolerant look towards the life despite all the problems of life. Humor is the ability to perceive, see, or express a ridiculous situation (Özünlü, 1999: 19). Laughter is a physiological sign of humor and humor uses laughter as a tool. The humor holds the ridicule, irony, and satire outside of laughing.

2. Humor Theories

Developments in technology, developments in communication facilities, developments in socio-economic levels of people, the effects of policies in the economic, social, cultural and political fields of states show different humor theories. In this study, the theories of humor in general will be studied under three headings as theory of superiority, relief theory and incongruity theory.

2.1. Superiority Theory

The origin of superiority theory is based on Plato and Aristotle. Its superiority is used in terms of its widespread use, its liking, increasing or continuing happiness. There is a close relationship between humor and sense of supremacy. Most humor is not only meant for laughter and pleasure, but also for taking a step further than the opposite. Factors like intelligence, culture, and behavior are effective in the superiority theory. According to this theory, one sees himself/herself as superior to other factors. In this context, people naturally

control other people's behavior, their situation and environment. When they see that people around them are in a difficult situation, they get pleasure from the unfavorable situation because they do not fall into a difficult situation and perceive the situation as a superiority.

According to Plato, who has a significant effect on the emergence of the theory of superiority, it is the fact that people are not aware of their situation in being ridiculous. Aristotle and Plato do not find the act of “laughing” very consistent. To them laughing “is not the work of serious people. In Aristotle and Plato, the claim that laughter is essentially a sense of ridicule and humiliation is the basis of the theory of superiority. Such theory is approached by Plato in another aspect. According to him, humor is a combination of pain and pleasure. In a broader sense, humor in Plato is a combination of the grief that we experience in the face of the misfortune of others and the grief that others have made us laugh. According to Aristotle, the essence of the ridiculous is that it is not noble and is based on the person's fault. However, this defect does not have any painful and harmful effects (Sanders, 2001: 35).

The superiority theory based on Aristotle and Plato was later developed by many thinkers. One of the most important of these is Hobbes. In a similar way to Aristotle and Plato, Hobbes thinks that laughing can harm one's character and expresses a laugh as self-celebration (Morreal, 1997: 10). In his work *Leviathan* (1651), Thomas Hobbes made important observations about laughter and influenced other thinkers for centuries. According to Hobbes, when a person feels superior to the others, he sees their flaws and laughs when he concludes that his situation is better than them. For Hobbes, laughing is a sudden pride. For example; a strong man's laughter when he sees a shepherd or a hump comes suddenly to his pride in his integrity in. Hobbes, in terms of humor, states that the sense of superiority arises as a result of man's own physical and psychological superiority.

With regard to the theory of superiority, the theory of humor based on superiority-inferiority includes only some of the states of humor. In particular, the instinctive aspects of laughing are effective. The theory may be valid in species with irony and irony, but absurd humor has difficulty in explaining what is funny in different humorous situations, such as wit. This theory is based on the view that people are relieved, lucky and superior in a number of ways in comparison to others.

2.2. Incongruity Theory

It can be said that the theory of incongruity has emerged as an opinion against the theory of superiority. According to this theory, humor emerges from the combination of two opposing or unrelated ideas, and the person faces an unexpected result. Laughing action creates discordant situations in the environment in which we live. In this theory, humor is taken as a cognitive process. In other words, while focusing on cognitive processes; social and emotional processes are secondary. According to the theory, humor is a mental reaction against a standstill that emerged suddenly. The irony and surprise that exist in humor is emphasized. Incongruity theory is based on the same theory of superiority as Aristotle. According to Aristotle, there is the idea that humor emerged at the basis of the theory of incongruity, as the individual faced a different result than the expectation. Aristotle laid the foundation of discordance theory (Eker, 2009 (b): 135).

After Aristotle, Kant and Schopenhauer developed this theory. According to Kant, laughter is the result of the expectation being wasted. Schopenhauer's opinion is slightly different from Kant. According to him laughing is a sudden discrepancy between objects. In other words, humor emerges as a result of the contradiction between our expectation and realization of this situation (Yerlikaya, 2009: 21). J. Beattie is considered to be the first scientist to really reveal the theory of conflict (Paulos, 2003: 8-9).

According to Beattie, laughter is divided into animal laughter and emotional laughing. There is no cognitive development to detect incompatibility in animal laughter. An example of such laughter is seen in babies. Emotional laughing occurs as a result of two or more discrepancies that the mind realizes. People have some expectations in the face of events, and when an event happens contrary to these expectations, this situation causes laughter when the opposite is the result of what is designed in mind. In this theory, humor is perceived as the effect of human mind perception of incompatibility (Elden and Copper, 2010: 224).

The defenders of the incongruity theory emphasize the relationship of humor with intelligence. In addition, the advocates of the theory emphasize that humor is related to the comprehension ability of individuals and mind flexibility. Therefore, this theory sees humor as a privilege of smart and intelligent people (Uçar, 2011: 21). In conclusion, the theory of

incongruity argues that humor is a mental reflex against the conflict and that it arises from the merger of more than one thought, element, and feature.

2.3.Relief Theory

The theories of superiority and incongruity tried to explain the factors that cause humor through the social hierarchy and order. They did not pay sufficient attention on the psychological dimension of laughter. One of the humor theories that does this is called the relief theory (Özpinar, 2012: 11). Relief is the physical and spiritual ejaculation resulting from the sudden liberation of suppressed or forbidden feelings and behaviors. Descartes (1649) was the first to explain the theory of relief. Descartes states that laughter is “the joy that occurs when we are indifferent to an evil or if we understand that it will not harm us elation”. The realization of the laughter event is that suddenly, good and pleasurable feelings cut off the normal thinking system. In such a situation, it is possible to get rid of the thought and its problems that are controlled by the act of laughter (Türkmen, 1996: 50).

This theory is based on the psychological effects of laughter. Its basic approach is that laughter relieves repressed or unused energy in people. Spencer is the first person to demonstrate that laughter is the mechanism of discharge of neural energy. In his essay “On the physiology of laughter” (1860), he states that the neural energy has a tendency to become mostly muscle movements and that muscle movement occurs when it reaches a certain density. According to Spencer, emotions and sensations lead to bodily movements, and to the extent that they are strong, the bodily movements are so severe (Koestler, 1964). Laughing is an action that occurs physiologically as a result of this process. John Dewey is another thinker who has views in the same direction.

Freud is the most respected thinker on the theory of relief. Freud's psycho-analytic theory is actually based on the theory of relief. Freud argues that laughter is the output of a psychic or a neural energy. Freud's theory has a special place and importance in the theories of relief. According to him, Humor and comic situations include spending through the laughing response of psychic energy, which has been separated but unnecessary to be spent in a particular mental state. According to Freud, normally we use our spiritual energy to suppress our sexual and aggressive desires and thoughts. However, thanks to the jokes we

make, our thoughts and emotions emerge and we no longer have to suppress them. This is not necessary when the joke is made and the energy is pressed by laughing (Yerlikaya, 2009: 24).

According to Freud, humor is an organized form of emotional reactions such as fear and shame. He describes a similar approach in the article by Shaftesbury (1711) entitled "Freedom of humor and wit". Relaxing by laughing means revealing the neural energy accumulated before a laugh. Prohibitions increase the will to do what is forbidden in man, and the desire that has not achieved this goal shows itself as unrevealed neural energy (cited in Morreal, 1997).

The theory of relief partially coincides with the argument that the incompatibility theory results in a different outcome. Suddenly, the expectations of relief theory are discharged from a dangerous situation to a non-hazardous situation as opposed to incompatibility theory. In the theory of noncompliance, it is a different way that results in laughter, although expectations are in the same plane except the danger dimension (Özpinar, 2012: 11). Therefore, it is stated by thinkers that all the situations that cause laughter cause relief. In this respect, it can be said that after a certain struggle or a troubled process, people relax when their tensions are removed and the act of laughter emerges as a result.

Relief theory has been effective not only in the field of psychology but also in many fields of science. Anthropology, folklore, sociology etc. The researchers of the disciplines use it to explain certain types of humor, such as political or sexual humor. For this reason, they are aware that humor has the power to relieve difficult life conditions.

Some criticisms have also been introduced to the theory of relief. Morreal states that it is not possible to reach a sudden discharge and relief of the neural energy in the case of intense emotions. The other criticisms against this theory are the inability to explain why neural energy is suddenly unnecessary (Morreal, 1997: 40-41).

Relief theorists have focused on relief from stress and distress. It has been suggested by many theorists that humor, that is, laugh, contributes to relief and to reduce tension in the body, In this context, there are those who associate the perception of mass media as an

escape route by individuals. For example, the classic cartoon is one of the ideal tools for escape and fun. It provides a certain relief. It provides a fun environment for the reader (Topuz, 1986: 70). On the other hand, when humor is considered as an assault weapon, for the uncomfortable authority in society, using the methods of overriding humor (mockery, satirize, caricature), to see the situation where the authorities have fallen into a bad position or are in a state of concern, relief tool (Kamiloğlu, 2013: 15). During the World War II, humor magazines discussed the humanity of the war, the political and economic problems and the riches of the war.

If humor is used as a socio-psychological phenomenon at appropriate times and methods, it can be said that it decreases the tension in the environment and eliminates stress or emotional stress. Laughing is the best medicine, the word that best expresses the outcome of humor. Approaching humor in the troubles and stresses sometimes contributes to the easier resolution of problems. In addition, it can be stated that humor is beneficial during the management process as much as it is necessary in appropriate methods and conditions. This theory helps or at least helps explain almost all political, sexual and some of the religious, ethnic anecdotes.

When we consider the Turkish society, it can be evaluated through the theory of relief, which is indisputable and partially prohibited. In Turkish society, it is not very pleasant to make a joke about sexual matters. People are negative about this because sexuality is a banned area and cannot be comfortably spoken in any environment. Women or men laugh close by talking to their fellow man about this banned area. The fact that there are many examples of sexual anecdotes is closely related to relief theory (Baki, 2011: 32).

3. Democratic Party

In the pre-1950 period, Turkey was ruled under a single-party regime. In 1946 the Single Party Regime ended with the governance of the Republican People's Party. During the Second World War, the economic measures and its results that the CHP (Republican People's Party) governments put into practice has been a tough test for the CHP government as well as for the Turkish people.

During and after Second World War, economic conditions caused subsistence problems, shortage of food and housing, worsening work and public health conditions and decreasing real wages and inflation. Also this era had price controls, the rationing of bread. It was during that era that the National Defense Law (1940) gave the state limitless control on the organization of the economy and the working life, the Agricultural Products Tax (1942) which negatively affected small landowners and subsistence peasants was initiated, and the Capital Levy (1942) that brought an extra fiscal burden mostly on non-Muslim minorities was introduced, and the Land Reform Law (1945) came into the scene which alienated large landowners.

The Land Reform Law of January 1945 made visible to the public the polarization and the desire for the transition to the democracy, both within the country and the CHP. The most polemical and hotly-debated article of the Law in the Turkish Grand National Assembly was article 17. Under this clause, “even up to three quarters of the land owned by farmers with more than 200 dönüm (50 acres) could be expropriated in densely populated areas” (Zürcher, 2004: 210). Article 17 made large landowners such as Adnan Menderes, start raising their voices in the TBMM (Turkish National Assembly) because the article allowed the government to levy and nationalize part of their lands. There were two basic reasons behind the opposition of the critics to the law and the government: economic and legal. They thought article 17 would destroy the medium sized agricultural industries that were necessary for productivity in the agricultural sector. The law also was considered not compatible with the “basic principles of democracy and its unquestionable provisions” because of “giving Ali’s property to Veli” (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi Session 17, 1945: 70).

On the 7th of June 1945, four of the CHP deputies, who were among the opponents within the party, submitted a proposal named ‘The Memorandum of the Four’ to the CHP Assembly Group (Ağaoğlu, 1972: 75). This proposal was demanding the abolishment of anti-democratic clauses in the laws and the party bylaws. It was signed by İzmir Deputy Celal Bayar, Aydın Deputy Adnan Menderes, İçel Deputy Refik Koraltan, and Kars Deputy Fuat Köprülü (Lewis, 2002: 98). This opposition was the first sign of a new political structure.

Despite this harsh opposition, the Land Reform Law was adopted on June 5, 1945. Memorandum was met with hostility within the Party and signatories of memorandum were

expulsed or resigned from party (Ahmad, 2017: 126). Due to the developments after the rejection of the Memorandum of the Four by the CHP government, on the 7th of January 1946, the Democratic Party was formed by Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Fuad Köprülü, and Refik Koraltan (Çufalı, 2004: 64) and the integrity of the electoral mechanism became a core value of the DP.

CHP held a general election in 1946 rather than in 1947 so as to take power and give the Democrats little time to organize. This is why the CHP won the elections with an overwhelming majority, leaving the DP with only sixty-two seats in the parliament. But given that the elections caught DP with a weak organization and that there was a general agreement about the elections conducted in an unfair environment, the sixty-two seats the DP had won could also be seen as a success for the DP (Ahmad, 2017: 130).

The DP's approach to the electoral mechanism in opposition became clear with the developments during the years between 1946 and 1950. The DP was very active during those years with the aim of improving the electoral system in Turkey. The starting point was the debate about the CHP government's decision of holding municipal elections earlier. This decision, which caused conflict between the CHP government and the DP opposition, increased the DP's efforts to amend the election law in order to enable electoral security (Sütçü, 2011: 344)

Second general elections of the multiparty era were held on the 14th of May 1950. The DP received 53.59 per cent of the votes, the CHP 39.98 per cent, the MP (the Nation Party) 3.03 per cent, and the independents 3.40 per cent of the vote. The DP consequently took 83.77 per cent of the seats in the TBMM, while the CHP took only 14.16 per cent (Toker, 1990: 25-26). The elections resulted in the DP becoming the main governing party. People were in need of a new government that could change their harsh life conditions. In this context, the 1950 elections had been the political expression of the people's dissatisfaction. The Democrat Party was successful in manipulating these conditions and the political atmosphere. The Democrat Party was the product of a common reaction of various social classes and groups in the uneasy atmosphere of war years (Timur, 2003:26).

The Parliament started its new term on the 22nd of May 1950. The character both of the new assembly, in which the DP held an overwhelming majority (408 seats against the

RPP's 69), and of the new government was very different from the old. The DP representatives were on average younger, more often had local roots in their constituencies, were less likely to have had a university education, and far more likely to have a background in commerce or in law. The most striking difference from the CHP was the virtual absence of representatives with a bureaucratic and/or military background. It was clear that a significantly different section of Turkey's elite had come to power (Zürcher, 2004: 221). Having come to the government through fair and free elections and with a great number of seats in the parliament, Democratic Party started to neglect the importance of holding elections timely as they defended while in opposition. In addition, they also started to disregard the significance of the other accountability mechanisms of a democratic regime.

The Democratic Party government, covering the period 1950-60, is seen as one of the most important stages on the road to democracy in Turkey. The Republican People's Party, which ruled the country from the proclamation of the republic in 1923 to the end of the Second World War, found itself in opposition for the first time after the 1950 elections, and thus Turkish democracy was given a first chance to stand on its own feet (Yücel, 2016: 144).

In the multiparty era, the Islamic religion and Islamic institutions began to play a more prominent role in influencing and organizing social and political life. As a matter of fact, the preliminary attempts towards modifying the relationship between politics and religion came from the CHP during the period of transition to the multiparty system (1945–50). Since 1950, the center-right political parties have tried to appeal to the electorate through policies involving the extensive use of religious references, support for the activities of religious groups, networks, and organizations, and the expansion of the functions, personnel, and budget of the official religious institution, the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Tarhanlı, 1993; Ayata & Ayata, 2007: 218).

Democratic Party was hasty in pushing forward Turkey economically and was reluctant to tolerate the obstacles when practicing their program. The Democratic Party did not pay much attention to the opposition. According to them, the CHP had completed its role. They saw themselves as the architects of modern Turkey. However, the democratic understanding of them was rather crude. They could not alter the anti-democratic mindset of the one-party period. This mentality could not stand any opposition, including those from

within their own parties (Ahmad, 2017: 133-134). The opening up new land for cultivation, agricultural mechanization, the favorable price conjuncture of the Korean War, favorable weather conditions, the flow of foreign aid, an aggressive agricultural credit and investment policy contributed to the significant leap in every aspect of macroeconomic indicators, as well as infrastructural modernization and increase in the availability of consumption goods (Boratav, 1988).

Four years after the 1950 elections the next general elections were to be held. For DP, the electoral victory was as important as holding elections free and fair. The parliamentary elections were held on the 2nd of May 1954 with a high turnout of 88.63 per cent. According to the results, the DP won 503 seats out of 541, while the CHP only won 31, the Republican National Party five, and independents two (Toker, 1990: 19). Nevertheless, the size of the 1954 victory strengthened the DP government to such an extent that it led to trouble both for the opposition and for the DP. The DP from that point onwards began to act in an authoritarian manner with the assumption that no authority could stop them (Belen, 1958: 190).

After the elections in 1954, political problems of Adnan Menderes –back then the prime minister and the founder of the DP- often originated from his own party. The first split in the DP occurred in 1955. The split was a result of the demands of 19 DP deputies for the removal of the authoritarian legacies of the single-party period, which had been promised by the DP. Specifically, the dissident DP deputies, who became known as the “advocators of the right to proof” demanded that journalists who had been taken to court should have the right to defend what they had written (Zürcher, 2004: 231). In the end, “advocators of the right to proof” were exiled from the party. Based on the success of the ruling party in the elections of 1954, their progress in antidemocratic direction was targeted at the criticism of different sections (Kabacalı, 1994: 170).

Turkey has experienced economic growth between the years 1950-1953 (around 13%). However, the basis of this economic growth was weak and in 1954 a stagnation statement emerged. The economic situation was getting worse. Especially during 1956-1959, inflation rose and economic growth rate fell (Ahmad, 2017: 139-141) While hardly any space left to maneuver in the liberal trade regime, the DP began to use the state apparatus more widely and frequently after 1954. This policy continued until 1958, when

the Menderes government finally felt obliged to hand the first “letter of intention” to the IMF (International Monetary Fund) (Boratav, 1988).

During the year 1957, the opposition parties attempted to create a coalition for the elections (Turan, 2002: 71). However, due to some amendments to the law of elections made by the government on the eve of the 1957 general elections, the coalition conditions for the opposition parties became highly difficult. DP government could not convince the opposition parties that the elections would be held under free and fair circumstances and the obstacles put forward by the government concerning the cooperation among the opposition parties in the elections strengthened this distrust (Aydemir, 2000: 241). Next elections were held amidst these debates on the 27th of October 1957. According to the election results, the DP won 424 seats, the CHP 178, the CMP 4, and the Free Party 4 showing that while the DP had lost support, the CHP had increased its votes (Giritlioğlu, 1965: 363).

Sadly, the results of the 1957 elections were not considered as a wakeup call for the DP. Instead, it continued its oppressive behaviors to consolidate its power. In 1958, DP created Vatan Cephesi (The Homeland Front) to seek public support for the DP, against opposition's coalition possibility. Meanwhile, it also continued to harass the opposition in every way possible (Ahmad, 2017: 114).

In April 1960, with the proposal of the DP Assembly Group, Investigatory Commission was established to investigate the activities of the opposition. The Commission was granted extraordinary powers that undoubtedly violated the principles of the Constitution. It was authorized to take possession of publications, close down newspapers and printing houses. It also granted the authorization to proceed against anyone not following the decisions of the Commission. The establishment of the Investigatory Commission was the final straw that broke the camel's back. Political strife was driven out into the streets, resulted in the Public Demonstrations of April 28 – 29, 1960 in Ankara and Istanbul. The demonstrators were the students and educated section of the society, including civil service and military officers' classes. Demonstrations continued through May 1960. Menderes tried to normalize the chaotic political situation by a promise to hold an early general election in September. But Menderes's gestures came too late. Groups of military officers, alienated from DP rule, had been conspiring to bring about its end. They carried out their coup on 27 May and toppled the Menderes government (Ahmad, 2017: 152-154).

The turbulent period of experimentation with multi-party democracy in the 1950s was burnt thoroughly into the memory of Turkish society through the May 27 coup, followed by the Yassıada trials and their outcome: the executions of Prime Minister Menderes, of Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan (Yücel, 2016: 145).

4. Political Humor in the period of Democratic Party

With the transition to multi-party life in Turkey, there emerged a sense of humor as a tool of political opposition. During the single-party period, humor was under pressure. Along with the multi-party system, the drawings in opposing journals seem to have begun to politicize cartoons. It is seen that after the establishment of the DP, the multi-party alliance with the transition, the humor has passed in the opposition wing, and is liberated (Öngören, 1998: 88). The most important humor magazine between 1945 and 1950 is "Marko Pasha". In the magazine, important names such as Sabahattin Ali, Aziz Nesin, Rifat Ilgaz and Mim Uykusuz took place. The magazine criticized the Republican People's Party harshly and tried to reflect the main complaints of the people. Marko Pasha is seen as the first representative of political humor in Turkey (Öngören, 1989, 15). In the third issue of the magazine, the owner Sabahattin Ali and the chief author Aziz Nesin were arrested and the magazine started to be spoken in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TGNA) (Arık, 2002: 249). The Markopaşa attacked government by the nature of the humor and took place on the side of the people against government. After the Markopaşa was closed, the magazine continued its publishing life with the names of Merhum Pasha, Bizim Pasha, Yedi Sekiz Hasan Pasha and Malum Pasha. Humor, from the Ottomans to today, is most used in the aggression function. The ridiculing of politics, the reduction of the respectability of the politician in the eyes of society, the harming of career is a good example of the aggression function frequently used by humor. The magazine harshly criticized the single-party government, blaming it for corruption and the bureaucracy for being slow. Humor looks at the function of aggression as a social task. Adnan Menderes is one of the politicians who is disturbed by humor. In the DP period humor has been able to create a public opinion on the citizens. In the case of the Dolmus magazine, the magazine was closed because Menderes was depicted as a peasant (Kamiloğlu, 2013: 168-69).

In this period, some humor magazines sided with the government while some others supported the CHP. Stone and Cartoon supported the CHP, and Akbaba defended the government. The Stone and Cartoon continued the publication life as a humor magazine of the CHP. The Stone and Cartoon magazine took a direct stance against the DP and tried to reflect the struggle between the DP and the CHP (Öngören, 1983: 1434-1439). Apart from these magazines, Karakedi, Tef, and Dolmuş magazines are also political humor magazines. The Akbaba magazine, after 1952, had an adverse attitude. The magazine attacks the CHP while supporting the DP. This dual situation caused the public to take a negative attitude towards the magazine. The criticisms of the single party, the reactions are intensely processed. The Karakedi magazine, a single party attitude is seen. In particular, the Karakedi magazine expressed in a favorable way that the single-party brought forth liberation (Öngören, 1983: 1434-1439). The Tef magazine is very rich in terms of employees and its publishing policy is social joy. In the Tef magazine, social events were discussed and contributed to the further expansion of the subject in the cartoon (Öngören, 1983: 1439). The Dolmuş magazine followed daily politics closely. The Dolmuş magazine has taken the example of modern magazines in the west. Scientific literature, especially literature and art, is the front plan. The magazine, which received the penalty of three times of confiscation, was acquitted in every case opened. In the magazine, mainly politicians took place (Sipahioğlu, 1999: 93; Özer, 2007: 16). Apart from his political attitude, the Dolmuş magazine has a rich writer and cartoonist staff, and has expanded the scope of humor and has added a societal dimension. In the Dolmuş magazine, important names such as Aziz Nesin, Rıfat Ilgaz, Suavi Süalp, Bulent Oran, Çetin Altan, Adnan Veli, Selami İzzet Sedes, Refi Cevat and Bedii Faik took place (Akpınar and Çalışkan, 2012: 8). The authors of the Tef and the Dolmuş magazine enrich the vocabulary of the magazine with new techniques. Caricaturists in particular have succeeded in adding to the social life beyond tradition. The Tef and the Dolmuş magazines contribute to the development of humor in this sense (Öngören, 1983: 107). They expressed the circles of the 50s by drawing what they wanted to say. In other words, humor is drawn to the line. And in this period permanent works have appeared in cartoonless prints (Güneri, 2008: 128).

The DP came to power alone in the 14 May 1950 elections. The DP defended popular sovereignty and said, "Enough! Promise nation" and came to power with the slogan. After 1950, the pressure on the humor of the DP increased. Groups supporting DP also

participated in this edition. In the first years of DP government, no intervention was made against the newspapers. But over the years, the DP government has been disturbed by criticism and tried to silence humor. This attitude of the DP can be likened to the attitude of the Party of Union and Progress. This attitude can be expressed as "Ride the rival with humor, silence the humor to avoid falling over". Tensions and conflicts between political parties in this period were reflected in humor magazines and many cartoonists were imprisoned. During this period, politicians tried to repress cartoonists. Halim Büyükbulut received a 14-month prison sentence for a cartoon he drew in the Ulus newspaper in 1955. In 1956 Ferruh Dogan's cartoon album "Ragged village" was collected. The Dolmuş magazine was confiscated before it was published. The Cumhuriyet newspaper was closed for 10 days due to a cartoon criticizing Adnan Menderes. Journalist Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın 26 months, Tef magazine cartoonist Ratip Tahir Burak 16 months, journalist Cemal Sağlam, 65 months, Millet Newspaper owner Fuat Arna was sentenced to 8 months of imprisonment (Yetkin, 1970: 275-282). Despite all these oppressions, during the DP period (1950-1960), the literacy rate of the public increased, the humor became more skilled and the rate of humor made was increased. As an example Turhan Selçuk won the Golden Palm Award in 1957 (Türk, 2015: 91).

Conclusion

During the DP period (1950-1960), there was a real maturity in humor. Depending on the impact of Turkey's political socio-economic and cultural processes which took place between 1950-1960, the humor in this period, has undergone a major transformation. The issue of humor has been enriched, the daily problems of the people, the real life of the people, social events started to be discussed. In this period, it can be said that humor magazines' dissenting attitude is not limited to current political issues, and humor has tried to keep the pulse of society and to respond to its needs. All kinds of economic, political, socio-cultural problems that have resonated in the social base have been dealt with in depth by humorists. Thus, a sense of humor that is realistic and intertwined with society has emerged in this period. Throughout history, humor has been a function of both opposition and wariness. For this reason they are under the pressure of political power. In the DP period, humor functioned both to inform the public and to interpret and criticize the

politicians (Yaşar, 2017: 476). Humorous opposition has also affected the public. The public has sided with the humor. Humor is at the forefront in this period.

Humor has been a standard-bearer of the opposition for the first time in Turkey. The conflict between the DP and the CHP is reflected in humor, and it appears that the DP and CHP pro-humor magazines appeared in this area. This period created its own humor magazines with his contradictory voices. The DP was tolerant of humor in the early days, but later disturbed by criticism, trying to silence humor. With the power of the DP, politicization in the cartoons seems to have increased. The fact that politics and politicians are now subjects in the cartoon has led to the re-implementation of the cans. Many magazines have been closed and arrested by many cartoonists. In particular, opposing cartoonists have been under constant pressure from both the political power (DP) and the DP supporters in press. The strong attitude of DP government, especially towards journalists, increased its violence day by day. DP era in Turkey, especially in the field of humor freedom disappeared after 1954. However, between 1946 and 1950, DP used to promise that if they would come to power the free press -an important element of a democratic rule of law- was to be ensured.

The pressure of political powers is one of the most effective ways of mobilizing humor. The pressure of the political power and the mistakes of the power during the DP period are quite high. The DP period, due to changes in the press law, is called 'The dark period'. Therefore, the May 27, 1960 coup was welcomed by the humor press. During the DP period (1950-1960), humor explained his own truths, tried to convey his thoughts to people and he tried to influence the perception of society on a certain subject. As such humor contributed to the formation of social opposition. In this period, humor saw the important problems of the society and fulfilled its functions by expressing these problems. Despite all the pressures, humorists, regardless of circumstances, taking into account the circumstances of the day, continued their criticism. As a result, the humor, as mentioned above, has acted on the agenda of politics during the DP period (1950-1960), has set the agenda according to the politicians and tried to produce social consciousness. In this period, humor has faced various prohibitions, restrictions and penalties. Humorists were sentenced to various prison sentences and the magazines they worked were closed down.

REFERENCES

- Ağaoğlu, S. (1972). Demokrat Parti'nin Doğuş ve Yükseliş Sebepleri. Bir Soru (The Causes of The Birth and Rise of the Democratic Party. A Question). İstanbul: Baha Matbaası.
- Ahmad, F. (2017). Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu, Çev. Yavuz Alogan, İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları.
- Akpınar, S. and Çalışkan, H. (2012) Metin Eloğlu'nun Şiirlerinde Mizah Öğeleri, Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Türkoloji Dergisi, 19 (2): 1-31.
- Aksoy, S. (2015). Televizyon Reklamlarında Mizah Kullanımına İlişkin Eleştirel Bir Analiz, Akdeniz Üniversitesi SBE, (Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi), Antalya.
- Arık, B. (2002). Karikatür Tarihimizde Bir Dönemeç: Marko Paşa Gazetesi, İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi, 12(1): 237-253.
- Ayata, S., Güneş Ayata, A. (2007). The Center Left Parties in Turkey, Turkish Studies, 8(2), 211-232,
- Aydemir, Ş. S. (2000). Menderes'in Dramı (1899-1960) (The Drama of Menderes). İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.
- Bakhtin, M. (2001). Karnavaldan Romana, Der: Sibel Irzık, İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Baki, Z. (2011). Tarihsel Süreç İçerisinde Türk Mizah Basınında Siyasi Aktörlerin Temsili, Atatürk Üniversitesi SBE, (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans tezi), Erzurum.
- Belen, F. (1958). Demokrasimiz Nereye Gidiyor? Siyasi Hatıralara Dayanan Tetkik ve Tahliller (Where Is Our Democracy Heading Towards? Studies and Analyses Based on Political Memoirs). İstanbul: Özyurt Basımevi.
- Boratav, K. (1988). Türkiye İktisat Tarihi, 1908-1985. İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi.
- Cebeci, O. (2008). Komik Edebi Türler. İstanbul: İthaki Yay.
- Cevizci, A. (2002). Paradigma Felsefe Sözlüğü, İstanbul: Engin yayıncılık.
- Çufalı, A. (2004) Türkiye'de Demokrasiye Geçiş Dönemi (1945-1950), Ankara: Babil Yayıncılık.
- Eker, G.Ö. (2009) (a). İnsan Kültür Mizah Eğlence Endüstrisinde Tüketim Nesnesi Olarak Mizah. Ankara: Geleneksel Yayıncılık.
- Eker, Gülin Ö. (2009) (b) İnsan Kültür Mizah İnsanlık Tarihinde Mizahın Serüveni: Felsefi Bir Problem Olan Mizahtan Eğlence Endüstrisinde Tüketim Nesnesi Mizaha, Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları,
- Elden, M. ve Bakır, U. (2010). Reklam Çekicilikleri Cinsellik, Mizah, Korku. İstanbul: İletişim Yay.

- Giritliođlu, F. (1965). Türk Siyasi Tarihinde Cumhuriyet Halk Partisinin Mevki (The Position of the Republican People's Party in Turkish Political History), Ankara: Ayyıldız.
- Göker, C. (1993). Gülme ve Güldüren Sanat Türleri, Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları.
- Güneri, C. (2008). Sanat Alanı Olarak Mizah: Sanat, Mizah, Karikatür İlişkisi ve Türkiye'den Üç Örnek, İnönü Üniversitesi SBE, (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans tezi), Malatya.
- Kabacalı, A. (1994). Türk Basımında Demokrasi, İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı Yay.
- Kamilođlu, Z. (2013). Penguen Dergisinden Hareketle Türk Karikatür Tarihinde Mizahın Saldırı İşlevi, Milli Folklor, 25(98): 165-173.
- Koestler, A. (1964). The art of creation, London: Hutchinson.
- Lewis, B. (2002). The Emergence of Modern Turkey. London: Oxford University Press.
- Millspaugh, D. Et al. (1979). Illustrated world Encyclopedia. New York: Bobley Company.
- Morreal, J. (1997). Gülmeyi Ciddiye Almak. (Çev: K. Aysenever-Ş.Soyer) İstanbul: İris Yayınları.
- Öngören, F. (1998). Türk Mizahı, İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları.
- Öngören, F. (1989). Cumhuriyetin 75. Yılında Türk Mizahı ve Hicvi, Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.
- Özer, A. (2007) Karikatür Yazıları, Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi yayınları.
- Özünlü, Ü. (1999). Gülmecenin Dilleri. Ankara: Doruk Yayınları.
- Özpınar, A. (2012). Mizah Dergilerinde Toplumsal Gündem: Penguen ve Cafcaf Dergileri Örneđi, Selçuk Üniversitesi SBE, (Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi), Konya.
- Paulos, J.A. (2003). Matematik ve Mizah, (Çev. Tuncer Dođan), İstanbul: Volkan Ofset.
- Sanders, B. (2001). Kahkahanın Zaferi: Yıkıcı Bir Tarih Olarak Gülme, Çev.Kemal Atakan, İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Sütçü, G. (2011). Playing the Game of Democracy Through the Electoral Mechanism: The Democratic Party Experience in Turkey, Turkish Studies, 12(3), 341-356.
- Tarhanlı, İ. (1993). Müslüman Toplum Laik Devlet, İstanbul: AFA Yayınları.
- Timur, T. (2003). Türkiye'de Çok Partili Hayata Geçiş. 3th ed. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi.
- Toker, M. (1990). DP'nin Altın Yılları: 1950-1954 (The Golden Years of the DP) Ankara: Bilgi.
- Topuz, H. (1986). İletişimde Karikatür ve Toplum, Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi.
- Tural, E. (2017). 12 Eylül 1980 Askeri Darbesinin Karikatür Üzerinden Analizi: Gırgır Dergisi Örneđi, TESAM Akademi Dergisi, 4(1): 35-66.

- Turan, İ. (2002). İsmet İnönü ve Tek Dereceli İlk Seçimler (1946-1950-1954-1957) Üzerine Seçmeler (İsmet İnönü and Selections on the First Direct Elections). Ankara: İnönü Vakfı.
- Türk, K.T. (2015). Türk Siyasal Hayatında Politik Mizah, Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi), İstanbul.
- TBMM Tutanak Dergisi. (1945). Term: VII, 7th Legislative Year, Session: 17, 14 May 1945.
- Türkmen, F. (1996). Mizahta Üstünlük Teorisi ve Nasrettin Hoca Fıkraları, V. Milletlerarası Türk Halk Kültürü Kongresi, Ankara.
- Uçar, Z. (2011). ÇEK ve TÜRK Mizah Anlayışı ve Mizahî Tipler, Ege Üniversitesi SBE, (Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi), İzmir.
- Yaşar, Ö. (2017). 27 Mayıs 1960 Darbesi Dönemi Çizgisel Mizah ve Demokrasi, Turkish Studies, 12(16): 471-492.
- Yerlikaya, E.E. (2009). Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Mizah Tarzları İle Algılanan Stres, Kaygı Ve Depresyon Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi, Çukurovva Üniversitesi SBE, (Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi), Ankara.
- Yetkin, Ç. (1970). Siyasal İktidar Sanata Karşı, Ankara.
- Yücel, İ. (2016). Turkish Experiments In Democracy: The Democratic Party And Religion In Politics Through The Eyes Of French Diplomats, Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies, 15(43), 144-176.
- Zürcher, E. J. (2004). Turkey: A Modern History. London: I.B. Tauris.

Jolita Horbauskienė

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

Ramunė Kasperavičienė

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

5. Humor in young democracy: functions and applications

Introduction

The theory of humour is considered to be a complex phenomenon in spite of the fact that it has been analysed for centuries so far. As suggested by Weinberger & Gulas (1992) a variety of definitions exist, but there is no unified understanding of the definition as the nature varies depending on the perspective which is taken to define humour. Some authors view it as a type of communication raising positive emotions (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006; Hurren, 2006). However, there is some criticism to this approach as some features making the speech humorous are left unconsidered although a humorous text always transfers incompatible meanings raising the audience's amusement (Gervais and Wilson, 2005; Banas, Dunbar, Rodriguez, & Liu, 2011).

It is acknowledged that humour is always context-based and therefore highly dependent on the linguistic, sociocultural and personal context it occurs (Chiaro, 1992, p. 77). The social function of humour as noted by Holmes (2000) does, that 'all utterances are multifunctional [...] [h]ence, a humorous utterance may, and typically does, serve several functions at once' (p. 166). In fact, as Priego-Valverde (2003) argues, humour can be used to do almost anything. Obviously, the functions of humour vary in relation to the setting (Attardo, 2017).

The most obvious function of humour is to create solidarity among the participants. As Davies (1998) shows, humorous exchanges are co-constructed, with participants taking up the humour produced by another speaker, elaborating on it, repeating it, commenting on it, or merely signalling their appreciation, thereby reinforcing it. The social function of humour is emphasized through its deviation from traditional patterns because it may eliminate, highlight, or impede socially acceptable norms. Traditionally humour serves as tool for criticism (Kuipers 2008: 364– 366). Together with criticism, humour may also be employed to socially unify the groups who share the same understanding of the context and content of humour.

Humour also depends very much on the peculiarities of the sociocultural environment. In some cultures and societies, certain humour genres are acceptable, while in others the same maybe be considered inappropriate. The genres of humour are diverse. However, political humour is considered to be a powerful tool for criticising political state of affairs, which augments dominating values and attitude towards politics. But as Tsakova and Popa (2011) argue, political humour does not necessarily affect politics as such.

Political humour, just like any other genre of humour, is supposed to criticise and impose incompatibilities with the traditional values and understandings in a political discourse and action of a particular society (Warner 2007). It is generally accepted that in a number of societies and political systems, humour is employed by various agents to criticise and place in disfavour their political competitors. Humour helps politicians to stay in line with acceptable behaviour norms and at the same time to downgrade the competitor's perspective (Martin 2004). Humour is also often considered an almost obligatory attribute for a political leader (Schnurr 2008) and, therefore, is positively assessed and desired in contemporary democratic societies. In the same way, politicians are willing to employ humourous remarks in their speeches as they see humour as a way to enhance their popularity. By using humour, they try to become associated with the audience and establish bonds as well as create a positive self-image and attract possible voters, at the same distracting the audience's attention from addressing significant issues (Martin, 2004; Meisel, 2009). Tsakona (2009) highlights that if used in situations where serious issues are discussed humour may have a boomerang effect and make the politician to be seen as incompetent and irresponsible, diminishing the possibilities for constructing their positive self-image.

Tsakona and Popa (2011) suggest three main perspectives of political humour as a means of criticising, which include 'humour produced by politicians usually as a means of attack

against their adversaries, as well as political humour produced by the media against politicians in power, and public debates on and with political humour' (p. 7).

In different sociocultural and political systems, political humour may be used differently. As noted by Georgalidau (2011), in a competitive democracy like Greek, humour is mainly aggressive, stimulating disparity and disgrace of opponents; meanwhile, in a consensus democracy like German, humour fosters collaboration. In the so-called young democracies like Lithuanian, where the political culture has no strong traditions, political humour may aim at demonstrating superiority and mockery rather than developing collaboration. This is reflected in superiority theories, which are based on the assumption that the feelings of superiority, mockery and amusement are the focus in humorous instances (Attardo 1994; Billig 2005; Levinson, 1998; Dadlez, 2011; Lintott, 2016). Apart from superiority and mockery, superiority theories also encompass aggressive conversational humour, which prevails in media, including political debates on TV.

Functions of Rhetorical Humour

Research into the strategic function of humour is scarce (Anderson, 2007). A nine-part model of strategic functions of rhetorical humour has been proposed by Phillips Anderson as a more comprehensive and informative approach. According to him (2007), rhetorical humour may function in three main categories: dispositional, topical and personal, which may function in a single instance of humour. The aim of dispositional strategies is the influence of the audience's feelings about the producer of the humour and the context. The dispositional strategies are further subdivided into those making the audience attentive to the situation, bringing about a positive mood and/or stimulating identification (Anderson, 2007). Gaining the attention of the audience is often achieved through jokes initializing the speech and serving to maintain the audience's attention throughout the rest of the speech. The mood unifying the audience may be created through making the audience aware of the speaker's further arguments, which are not necessarily humorous. Mood creation is the way to reinforce the positive attitude of the audience about a politician. The identification of shared values/beliefs between a politician and the audience may be created by making the audience understand that they share the same perspectives with a politician, which draw their attention and willingness to listen to the speech to the end. Phillips Anderson (2007) also highlights that identification may pervade topical and personal strategies; however, here

the focal point is the emotional state of the audience based on acceptance of identification. Topical strategies involve using the subject matter of the humour in order to accomplish the purpose of the speech, which may be shedding light on an argument, topic introduction or distancing the audience from a particular topic. In cases where the subject raises difficulty for the speaker to debate on, instances of humour may help to divert the audience's attention from delving into the unwanted topic (Anderson, 2007). Personal strategies involve maintaining or establishing the image of the speaker, which may occur via demonstration of wisdom, deviation from personal criticism or an attack towards the opponent keeping the esteem of the audience.

The nine-part model of humour strategies, proposed by Phillips Anderson (2007), has two-fold significance. This theory may be well employed by politicians in a variety of political discourse for successful delivery of political speeches consciously making use of humorous elements to achieve the aims set. Another value of the model lies in its defined framework which may be used to analyse and interpret the instances of humour in political persuasion or political discourse overall.

Methodology

The current Lithuanian political discourse has no deep roots in tradition and culture. A general observation is that humour is employed relatively rarely and without a definite purpose. Although the Lithuanian political elite is in its youth compared with countries with long history of political discourse, Smetonienė (2013) notes that some successful attempts to use rhetoric for specific purposes are becoming a tendency. Therefore, for the purposes of the particular research, instances of humour in the Lithuanian political discourse at different levels were analysed to determine trends in use of humour strategies. The instances for current analysis were selected from different public sources (stenographed records of parliamentary debates and city council meetings) and governmental levels (e.g. municipality, parliament, government) due to scarcity of examples. The total duration of stenographed meetings was 50 hours. The political figures whose humour instances were analysed were also of different popularity and recognition. Some of the analysed instances of humour were based on media and parliamentary settings, which are well-known and highly-discussed, while others remain within the level of a particular institution and/or context.

Results and discussion

The analysis of the collected data tends to show how mostly mocking and offensive language as well as humour are used in the political discourse. A number of examples of such use of humour have been noticed. In a meeting of a city council, one member claimed that it was difficult to rescue ice fishing enthusiasts from getting stranded on split ice floes, because when rescuers lift them from those dangerous places, they immediately return back when they get the chance. An ironic observation was made by the member of the council that maybe it was not worth rescuing such citizens: 'The best way to rescue those fishermen is to let them drown. The state should provide them with pins that have their name, surname and a personal identification number. When spring or summer comes, yachtsmen could collect their corpses and, once identified, return them to their relatives and loved ones. The solution is cheap and simple.'³⁸ This example illustrates not only mockery, but also cruel sarcasm. In terms of strategies, the particular instance falls within the topical category where the issue under discussion highlights a very sensitive problem where municipality budget money is featured as the pre-dominant value and raised over humanistic values. Whatsoever, the purpose of this instance is not very apparent since it sounds quite cruel but does not lead to any possible solution.

In another discussion in the Parliament about possible restrictions for alcoholic beverages, a member of the opposition draws attention to the fact that during this particular discussion an excursion of children was organised to the Parliament house and the children were listening. The speaker employs humour that falls within the topical strategies: 'I would suggest finding out who invited the children to the plenary meeting hall when alcohol is being discussed. <...> Excursion is what it is called. However, I'm very happy that we have saved Lithuania from a huge shame with this voting. Yesterday, I was talking with my Latvian colleague, member of the Parliament and the Seimas. He suggested this law: to announce Lithuania as a coop and have all the companies that reside 5 kilometres from the Lithuanian border towards Latvia exempted from tax. Here is yet another suggestion from the Mayor of Riga: The capital of Latvia should be named [suggests to rename the capital of Latvia to the name of the current Lithuanian Minister of Health], because if everywhere else we saw enclosures and coops, then we could actually sit down and buy some alcohol there. I congratulate you once again that results could finally be achieved with a logical and smart solution proposed in Seimas.' The speaker's humour is oriented towards the whole situation

38 The quotes were translated from the Lithuanian language.

referring to new alcohol restrictions proposed by a power block in the parliament as they restrict not only the possibility to purchase alcoholic beverages, but also they can be interpreted as a restriction of citizen's personal rights. The remark about the children's presence in the plenary hall distances the audience's attention from an important topic of alcohol-related restrictions to a rather irrelevant, but ironic, issue of children listening to the debate. At the same time, the speaker most probably intends to downgrade the topic as a trivial one.

In a discussion on the surplus budget, a member of the opposition employs humour when speaking about the allocation of the budget: 'Dear colleagues, we are contemplating the surplus budget. Of course, that surplus isn't going to be eaten; it will stay here. The surplus budget should be put towards the solutions of major problems, such as ageing, emigration, low salaries of researchers, and the wellbeing of pensioners. Is the surplus budget used to combat these problems? These problems are getting severe and we're trying to put out the fire with a tea spoon of water while calling our efforts socially oriented.' The speaker gives arguments how the budget money should be allocated by criticising the parliament members, including himself, whose efforts to deal with increasing problems are less than sufficient. The speaker further refers to a well-known movie: 'That's the protocol decision. Remember the movie "Nobody Wanted to Die"? One worker asked: "Should I plough or not?" And the man answered: "If you can, don't plough." "But am I still going to get some bread?" asked the worker. "No, but I'm going to give you a rifle", answered the man. You know what the worker had to say to that suggestion. The same is happening here with our protocol decision.' This humorous allusion criticizes the current decision of the parliament regarding the irrational allocation of the budget emphasizing the parliament's ignorance of the long-term problems and inability to solve them.

For the purposes of topical strategies, humour is employed by references to expensive efforts in order to achieve insignificant results. In addressing the issue of criminalizing small scale smuggling, a member of the parliament argues: 'Small-scale smuggling and crimes that used to be prosecuted based on the Code of Administrative Offences are now being included in the Criminal Code. This means that we have increased the criminal liability. It's like some of my colleagues want to use cannons to kill mosquitoes, not even birds. Mosquitoes, because the use of criminal <...> intelligence, which is only permitted to those that drive Lada, Opel or Passat to distribute small-scale smuggling, is going to make the process a lot more expensive.' The speaker refers to old and cheap cars, which are used by smugglers who live nearby the border and use the cars to bring cigarettes, alcohol, petrol,

etc. into the country without paying taxes. Their prosecution and sentencing will now be similar to those cases where large-scale contraband is involved. The speaker here uses humour for the purpose of criticising the arguments supporting the law project.

Many instances of humour employed by parliament members within the topical strategies in principle diminish or exaggerate the importance of the issue discussed.

Another element of humour that is prevalent in the Lithuanian political discourse falls under the personal strategy highlighting demonstration of wisdom and deviation from personal criticism at the same time. A former politician, in close family relation to an influential member of parliament, appointed to a high managerial position in a state owned institution, stated that he ignored the highly publicly discussed story of how he was appointed for a long time, but after the conclusions of the parliamentary ethics committee regarding his appointment he could not resist expressing his opinion: 'First of all, everybody knows that to become a politician (or even a minister) you should be an orphan in Lithuania. It would be even better if you also had no friends, lead a modest lifestyle, and did not really have any work experience. Why? Because if you have parents, especially well known or well accomplished, it's bad. You have friends? Well, if they are poor, then maybe it's ok, but if at least one of them is successful in business, that's bad. You know, protection from higher-ups, influence and so on. Do they have a lot of work experience? Well, you should know from where! They might cause a threat to national security or they might be the ears of oligarchs. Once you retire from the politician's lifestyle, the only place for you is the employment office. Of course, emigration and suicide are also options.' This particular example illustrates great disappointment in the values and at the same time self-esteem retention in the eyes of the audience through demonstration of being smarter than the opponents as well as attacking them. This public figure attempts to maintain the self-image by employing humour via personal strategies with the aim to keep him visible for future political career.

Another example of humour illustrates the personal strategy provoking an attack on the opponents. In his response to a comment from the adversaries that the current majority is in fact the minority, a member of the majority addresses the parliament: 'Dear members of the Seimas and dear conservatives, the Social Democrats group have voted non-unanimously to approve joining the opposition. (Voices in the meeting room) Yes, so what now? Does it mean that the ones who voted differently are not members of the political party? The group has 19 members and the majority voted positively. The decision was legitimate and there is no need to mislead other members of the Seimas. You did not succeed in splitting up the

governing party so now you feel very troubled and distressed because you could not elect [name of the leading party in the opposition] as the Prime Minister. Be patient, you will succeed one day! (Voices in the meeting room) See how much the conservatives want [name of the leading party in the opposition] to become the Prime Minister.’ This example demonstrates both the speaker’s deviation from personal criticism as well as the attack on the opponent through usage of humour.

Attacks on opponents by way of humour employment are extremely frequent throughout the analysed data. Some of the selected examples showing attacks on the opponents at the same time had a hidden mockery element. For example, in the discussion about the countries that should be helped after natural disasters, a member of a small political block in opposition has mocked another member who proposed to send humanitarian aid to the United States: ‘Thank you. Dear [name of the member proposing the resolution project], I have some doubts about your foreign policy and your overall knowledge of international policies. You have just demonstrated this ignorance by demanding that during the “Zapad” military exercise the President should stay in Lithuania instead of going to the United Nations, because that might put our country in danger. The President, however, continued her presidential duties, did not listen to you, and discredited you. The “Zapad” military exercise did not cause disturbances that would warrant the President to stay in the country. How would you assess your knowledge of international policies? Also, another question: Is your partially owned [company name] ready to deliver dumplings?’ This is an open attack with elements of insult having no other specific purpose except to discredit the presenter’s competence in the eyes of the parliament members.

In the discussion, already mentioned above, about alcohol-related restrictions, a member of the conservative party which represents the opposition employs sarcastic humour to downgrade importance of the opponent’s arguments: ‘Dear colleagues, I would also like to rejoice that the somewhat majority can gather together in the Seimas and, with some effort, come to a rational decision. Congratulations! However, the arguments provided by the Minister have shocked me. The Minister said that those coops should be established, because a person might see alcohol being sold during holidays, give into the temptation, start abusing it, etc. Based on this irrational argument, all alcohol in supermarkets like [names of the supermarkets] should be banned, because people are more inclined to visit those places and once they see a bottle of alcohol, they might not be able to control themselves. Also, alcohol should be banned from cafés and restaurants. If we try to govern our country with such rational arguments, then, dear majority, I fear for the future of our

country.’ The speaker sees the arguments illogical since the main value of democracy is the right to choose, which by the proposed restrictions could be limited. The management of a small issue is exaggerated to the governance of the entire state with a sad perspective.

The same discussion continues with yet another speaker’s humorous argument about the so-called coop: ‘I would like to address everybody, who promote the term “coops”. Dear colleagues, once you step out of the Seimas and visit a café, you are immediately in a coop. If you consume alcohol in an outdoor café, you are in that coop. If you step outside of the café with a glass of alcohol still in your hand, you are considered to be drinking in public. However, speaking of this “coop” thinking, according to you, the Seimas is the biggest coop, because you can become a member only if you’re above 25.’ Here, the entire notion of the parliament and the members of it are humouristically compared to a coop, which distances the attention of the audience from the topic under discussion and diminishes the rationale of the arguments of members in the opposition.

Following the discussion on the budget allocation, after the voting, a member of the opposition makes a remark thanking another speaker: ‘I’d like to thank [name of the member of the parliament] for unintentionally finding an arithmetical law that lets us save one-and-a-half times our spent expenses, which aren’t even planned in our budget.’ This is again an illustration of the use of humour to show wisdom by making an ironic mocking expression towards the opponent’s competences.

In most cases of the analysed examples where humour falls within the personal strategies, attacks on the adversaries are dominant, thus deviating from personal criticism. Besides, often such instances of humour are intended to demonstrated the speakers’ own wisdom.

FINAL IMPLICATIONS

Humour in the political discourse of a country without a long democratic tradition, like Lithuania, is employed in diverse ways; however, the majority of humour instances fall within the categories of topical and personal strategies, when politicians use humour to achieve the aim of self-esteem establishment and retention in the eyes of the audience as well as criticism towards the adversaries, thus distancing themselves from criticism. Humour employed within the personal strategies is most commonly intended to attacks on adversaries and deviate from personal criticism. Besides, humour used in the debates is

often intended to reveal the speakers' own wisdom, making offensive remarks about opponents' different perspectives. Within the topical strategies, humour instances are meant to diminish or exaggerate the significance of the issue discussed by parliament members. Humour helps them to show superiority over opponents by demonstrating smartness or making ironic or even sarcastic comments towards the opponents' arguments or competences overall.

Another important observation, yet not confirmed by statistical data in this study, is scarcity of humour instances in the political discourse, which demonstrates that politicians still are not capable of employing humour consciously in order to achieve their set aims. Unlike in countries with a deep democratic tradition where humour most often is employed for cooperative purposes, here humour serves as a means to split rather than unify the minds and efforts.

REFERENCES

- Attardo, S. (1994). *Linguistic Theories of Humor*. Berlin, NY: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Attardo, S. (2017). *Humor in Language*. Oxford Research encyclopaedias.
online:
<http://linguistics.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.001.0001/acrefore-9780199384655-e-342#acrefore-9780199384655-e-342-bibItem-0011>
- Banas, J. A., Dunbar, N., Rodriguez, D., & Liu, S.-J. (2011). A review of humor in educational settings: Four decades of research. *Communication Education*, 60(1), 115–144.
- Billig, M. (2005). *Laughter and Ridicule. Towards a Social Critique of Humour [Theory, Culture and Society]*. London: Sage.
- Chiaro, D. (1992). *The Language of Jokes: Analysing Verbal Play*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Dadlez, E. M. (2011). Truly Funny: Humor, Irony, and Satire as Moral Criticism. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 45(1):1– 17.
- Davies, Ch. (1998). *Jokes and their Relation to Society [Humour Research 4]*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Holmes, J. (2000). Politeness, power, and provocation: How humor functions in the workplace. *Discourse Studies*, 2(2), 159–185.
- Fotion, N. (2003). From Speech Acts to Speech Activity. In John Searle, edited by B. Smith, 34-51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Gervais, M., & Wilson, D. S. (2005). The evolution and functions of laughter and humor: A synthetic approach. *The Quarterly Review of Biology*, 80(4), 395–430.
- Georgalidau, M. (2011). Stop caressing the ears of the hooded: political humour in times of conflict. In (eds.) Tsakova, V., Popa, D. (2011). *Studies in Political Humour: In between political critique and public entertainment*. pp. 83-107. John Benjamins Publishing.
- Hurren, B. L. (2006). The effects of principals' humor on teachers' job satisfaction. *Educational Studies*, 32(4), 373–385.
- Kuipers, G. (2008). "The sociology of humour." In *The Primer of Humour Research [Humour Research 8]*, Victor Raskin (ed.), 361– 398. Berlin/New York: Mouton De Gruyter.
- Levinson, J. (1998). Humor. In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 4, edited by Edward Craig, 562–567. London: Routledge.
- Lintott, S. (2016). Superiority in Humor Theory. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 74 (4): 347-358.
- Martin, D. M. (2004). "Balancing on the political high wire: The role of humour in the rhetoric of Ann Richards." *Southern Communication Journal* 69: 273– 285.
- Meisel, J. S. (2009). "Humour and insult in the House of Commons: The case of Palmerstone and Disraeli." *Parliamentary History* 28: 228– 245.
- Phillips-Anderson, M. (2007). *A theory of rhetorical humor in American political discourse*. University of Maryland, College Park, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Priego-Valverde, B. (2003). *L'humour dans la conversation familière: Description et analyse linguistiques*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Romero, E. J., & Cruthirds, K. W. (2006). The use of humor in the workplace. *The Academy of Management Perspectives*, 20(2), 58–69.
- Schnurr, S. (2008). *Leadership Discourse at Work. Interactions of Humour, Gender and Workplace Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech Acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle J. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smetoniene, I. (2013). Politikų diskursas retoriniu aspektu: pristatymo žanras. Parlamento studijos. Nr. 14, <http://www.parlamentostudijos.lt/Nr14/Nr14.htm>

- Tsakona, Villy. (2009). "Humour and image politics in parliamentary discourse: A Greek case study." *Text and Talk*, 29:219-237.
- Tsakova, V., Popa, D. (2011). *Studies in Political Humour: In between political critique and public entertainment*, edited by Villy Tsakona, and Diana Elena Popa, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ktu-ebooks/detail.action?docID=795369>.
- Warner, J. (2007). "Political culture jamming: The dissident humour of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart". *Popular Communication* 5: 17-36.
- Weinberger, M. G., & Gulas, C. S. (1992). The Impact of Humor in Advertising: A Review. *Journal of Advertising*, XXI (94), 35–59.

Leigh Nanney Hersey, University of Louisiana Monroe

Claire Vidrine, Mississippi College

6. No Laughing Matter: Political Cartoonists Take on the #MeToo Movement

INTRODUCTION

Political cartoonists use humor and satire to visually summarize current events. While the cartoons often exaggerate and simplify at the same time, they can often capture the underlying mood of the citizenry toward a particular issue or event. Recently, the #MeToo movement became a common topic for political cartoonists to incorporate into their drawings. The movement captured the United States as the country grappled over the next stage of women's rights and equality. Originally started in the early 2000s, the more recent version was initiated by female celebrities who had been sexually harassed by influential men in the entertainment/film industry. Admissions spread to women in political circles, business situations, and everyday life.

This chapter demonstrates how political cartoons depicted the #MeToo movement. As the movement is ongoing and continues to reframe itself as new allegations are revealed, this study focuses on the time period from October 2017 to January 2018. This time frame spans the catalyst of the #MeToo movement, from the accusations against movie producer Harvey Weinstein to the Times Up movement. The research team used content analysis to determine the main themes used in political cartoons addressing sexual harassment and the #MeToo movement. The objective of the chapter is to identify the social construction of the victims and the accused of sexual harassment. Through the identification of social construction

faced by sexual harassment victims and the accused, one is able to better recognize the different social messages portrayed by the editorial cartoonists.

BACKGROUND

Sexual harassment has been an issue everyone knew about, but no one talked about. Under the brave leadership of a small group of women, the topic of sexual harassment has become a public issue and opened the discussion of harassment to girls and women from all walks of life. What was once a taboo subject, is now able to be openly discussed and debated. Political cartoons play a part in this wider availability for discussion through the means of displaying the world on a much simpler scale, while providing levity to the situation at hand. It is the objective of the authors to explore the different perspective which political cartoons' humor can give to difficult subject matter.

Political cartoons have been able to help interpret the situation of the #MeToo movement. Bringing to readers clarity, levity, calling out the hypocrisy of society and abusers, while also lauding the bravery of survivors. Political cartoons can bring all these points to the reader, while still being able to get readers to laugh and engage their minds through satire and over-embellishments of difficult situations. Focusing the attention of readers to the problems not only of those who were recently accused of sexual harassment or misconduct, but to broader aspects within society which need to change. These topics are not always addressed by mainstream conversations, but find a home in political cartoons. One such example is a cartoon where a male newscaster is reporting on the topic of sexual harassment. While in the next scene his female co-anchor is asking him to stop groping her and is told to be silent and let the male finish talking. Overall, the humor present in political cartoons has been able to add to the conversation of the #MeToo movement, while also being able to be widely distributed in the social media age.

Political Cartoons

Political cartoons have had a long standing in American history. Benjamin Franklin has been credited with one of the earliest contributors with his famous "Join, or Die" drawing from 1754 (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981). Today, "(p)olitical cartoons provide humorous

commentary, often using exaggeration of events or individual characteristics, on contemporary issues and events” (Connors, 2010, p. 299). Humor is a unique tool, used to allow readers to process challenging information, while also being able to call to attention aspects of that challenging information which can easily be overlooked. Having the distinctive ability to ask readers’ questions about the situation (either as a whole or as a society) without seeming like a lecture. The short and condensed format of political cartoons also finds a comfortable home within the digital age. Making the sharing and posting of a cartoon easy to read and digest on a social media newsfeed.

Various paradigms explain the uses and effects of caricature like that often seen in political cartoons. Some of the most common are the psychoanalytical, the sociological, and the communicative (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981). The psychoanalytical paradigm “reminds us that symbolism is the heartbeat of caricature and that condensation and displacement play central roles in the production and interpretation of political cartoons” (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981, p. 198). The sociological and communicative models “focus attention on the culture which produces caricature, the symbolic resources available in such a culture, and the potential meaning of symbology within specific socio-political contexts” (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981, p. 198). For cartoonists to be successful with their imagery, they “must know and utilize the beliefs, values, and attitudes of his audience if he or she is to be an effective persuader” (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981, p. 204).

Sexual Harassment and the #MeToo Movement

The concept of sexual harassment, particularly in the workplace, has changed over the decades. Battery and rape were once seen as a private matter, to be handled by families rather than authorities (Crenshaw, et al., 1991). Legislation in the 1970s and 1980s began to address harassment as an equal employment and educational opportunity protected by Title VII (Marshall, 2016). In the late 1970s, sexual harassment became part of the agenda for national women’s organizations such as NOW and the National Women’s Political Caucus (Marshall, 2016). Schultz’s theory of sexual harassment “sees harassment as an expression of workplace sexism, not sexuality or sexual desire. Harassment is a way for dominant men to label women ... as inferior and shore up an idealized masculine work status and identity” (2018; see also Schultz 1998 and Schultz 2002).

In October 2017, accusations of sexual harassment were made against US film producer Harvey Weinstein. Afterwards, the floodgates seemed to open as more and more women came forward with accounts of sexual harassment, assault, and rape by powerful men. Women began to share their experiences on social media using the #MeToo platform to bring attention to the volume of similar experiences and the movement became a global phenomenon (Zarkov and Davis, 2018). By expressing this shared experience “women have recognized that the political demands of millions speak more powerfully than the pleas of a few isolated voices” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1241).

Many think of this stream of events as the beginning of the #MeToo movement. However, as noted by Zarkov and Davis (2018), the #MeToo movement “started in the USA a decade ago as activism by Black women who had experienced sexual violence” (p. 3), letting other survivors know they were not alone. The movement reignited when actress Alyssa Milano tweeted "If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet," (Johnson, et al., 2018) on October 15, 2017. Between October 2017 and January 2018, Manikonda, et al, (2018), collected more than 620,000 Twitter posts from more than 205,000 users that used the hashtag #MeToo.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to explore and analyze the political cartoons published during the early stages of the #MeToo movement. The authors used graphic content analysis to identify the key messages of the political cartoons addressing the #MeToo movement. Neuendorf (2002) describes content analysis as the “systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (p. 1). Graphic content analysis focuses on the drawings and pictures used in addition to the text. By examining the various cartoons, including similarities and differences, a bigger picture of this interpretation of the #MeToo movement can be drawn. From this analysis, the authors developed a social construction of the key participants of the movement.

First, a timeline was established for uniformity sake, spanning from October 2017 to January 2018. This timeframe allows for the catalyst of the #MeToo movement, accusations against movie producer Harvey Weinstein, to be encompassed and still include Times Up. Times Up is an anti-harassment coalition formed by more than 300 women in Hollywood. Other notable accusations during this time period include Roy Moore’s alleged history of

preying on underage girls, Matt Lauer's firing after allegations of sexual misconduct, and Senator Al Franken's resignation amid sexual misconduct allegations.

Once the timeline was established, the research team searched for residential editorial cartoonists from newspapers in each state. Freelancing has led to fewer residential editorial cartoonists at local newspapers, reflecting the general decline in newspaper staff. For example, "Jen Sorensen, has frequently drawn for the Austin Chronicle, yet her recognized work was created on a freelance basis — an increasing trend in cartooning, as the number of staff jobs has dwindled from hundreds to dozens over the past several decades." (Cavna, 2017). The search identified fifteen states with residential cartoonists that published editorial cartoons related to the #MeToo movement: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah. Sixteen newspapers were chosen for analysis: *The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock)*, *Atlanta (GA) Journal-Constitution*, *The Augusta (GA) Chronicle*, *The Indy (IN) Star*, *The Advocate (LA)*, *The Boston (MA) Herald*, *The Columbus (OH) Dispatch*, *The Miami (FL) Herald*, *The Clarion-Ledger (Jackson, MS)*, *The Minneapolis (MN) Star Tribune*, *AL.com (Birmingham/Huntsville, AL)*, *Salt Lake (UT) Tribune*, *The Big Bend (TX) Gazette*, *Pittsburg (PA) Post*, and *The New York (NY) Daily Mail*. In addition to the traditional media of newspapers, five creative coalitions for political cartoons or syndicates were also used: Washington Post Writers Group and Cartoonist Group, Andrews McMeel Syndicate, Artizans, Crators.com, and Politicalcartoons.com. Within the new social media and digital age, the rate of creative coalitions and syndicates have risen since many local newspapers can no longer afford to staff a full-time editorial cartoonist. This allows for cartoonist's material to still be seen by readers, but in a different format from the traditional print version of newspapers.

Third, if the local newspaper employed an editorial cartoonist, its available material was searched for relevant artwork pertaining to the #MeToo movement, or a person accused of sexual harassment published during the identified timeframe. A total of 82 political cartoons were identified for this study.

Fourth, each cartoon was then independently cataloged based on assessments of the messaging of the cartoon, twice. Then the two-independent catalogs were unified into one system, allowing for the messaging, content, and subject-matter to be independently categorized. From the cataloging, the research team identified the primary themes of the cartoons and the social construction of the participants.

RESULTS

The results explore a variety of information about the political cartoons. The first section provides descriptive statistics about the cartoons that were analyzed. Then some of the common themes of the cartoons are presented. The results sections conclude with the social construction of those depicted in the cartoons.

Descriptive Statistics

Although 15 state and 16 newspapers were studied, there is a lot of variation in how much attention the #MeToo movement was given. The number of cartoons published ranged from 1 to 14, with a mean of 5.125. Georgia published the most political cartoons covering the topic, at 14, with Minnesota close behind at 12 published cartoons. The South had the most states with newspapers publishing editorial cartoons on the #MeToo movement, with seven states. However, the Midwest had the highest average number of cartoons per state at 6.33. Table 1 provides an overview of the number of cartoons analyzed by state.

Table 1: Number of Political Cartoons by State

State	# of Cartoons	Region
Alabama	5	South
Arkansas	7	South
Arizona	8	West
Florida	2	South
Georgia	14	South
Indiana	1	Midwest
Louisiana	6	South
Massachusetts	6	Northeast
Minnesota	12	Midwest
Mississippi	2	South
New York	1	Northeast
Ohio	6	Midwest
Pennsylvania	1	Northeast
Texas	1	South
Utah	3	West
Syndicated	7	
Total	82	
Mean	5.125	

Common Themes

In their research of 42 cartoonists depicting the 1980 presidential campaign, Medhurst and Desousa (1981), identified four major formulas: political commonplace, literary/cultural allusions, personal character traits, and situational themes. They describe political commonplaces as “those topics which are available to any cartoonist working within a modern nation-state” (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981, p. 199). Examples include the economy, foreign relations, the electoral framework, and national defense.

The primary theme for this study was sexual harassment and the #MeToo movement. But even with this narrow scope of investigation, several other political commonplaces were prominent in the cartoons. Several cartoonists focused on the partisan politics. These cartoons demonstrated how prominent politicians reacted to the accusations, based on if they were of the same or opposing party. Eleven, or 13%, of the cartoons analyzed used the partisan bias in their work. Another theme was the depiction of how everyday men reacted to the allegations. While the exact reactions varied, they all showed how husbands and fathers were realizing the impact and prevalence of sexual harassment in America. One cartoon showed a father reading a newspaper with the headlines of the accusers. He looks back at his young daughter playing in the next room and thinks “#pleaseGodnothertoo” (Sack, 2017). Another cartoon shows a man carrying a placard that shares his remorse for not speaking up when he saw harassment. Next to him stands another man, carrying a #MeToo sign (Davies, 2017).

Medhurst and Desousa (1981) also found many cartoonists to use a literary or cultural allusion, or a fictitious or mythical character from legend, folklore, or literature. A few such allusion appeared in the cartoons analyzed. Four kinds of statuary showed up in the cartoons – Rodin’s *The Thinker*, the Oscar award statue, Mt. Rushmore, and the winged female statue of Victory. Two movies appeared in the cartoons. The first drew on *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, with a medieval man carrying a cart filled with the accused, chanting “Bring out your dead careers!!!” (Sack, 2017). The second cartoon played on one of Dustin Hoffman’s early movie roles, *The Graduate*. Except in this cartoon, instead of being seduced by Mrs. Robinson’s leg, it is his leg that is exposed to a young female (Benson, 2017). Other recurring characters included pigs (three times), Santa Claus (twice), and Wonder Woman (twice).

Cartoonists also draw upon popular perception of the personal character of those depicted in the caricature (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981). These characteristics may include such traits

as intelligence, honesty, age or leadership. Medhurst and Desousa (1981) argue that “(n)o traits, ..., can be *totally* manufactured by the cartoonist. The trait must exist to some extent in popular consciousness or graphic tradition before it can be amplified and caricatured by the artist” (Medhurst and Desousa, 1981, p. 202). In reviewing the cartoons, the characteristics of two accusers were the most prominent. Roy Moore, who was running for U.S. Senate, had two identifying characteristics – his hat and the Ten Commandments. In nine of the cartoons featuring Roy Moore, he is wearing a cowboy hat. The hat is either enlarged and exaggerated, or it is small and child-like. Four times, Moore is carrying a form of the Ten Commandments tablets in the cartoon. The Ten Commandments alludes to an earlier controversy when Moore hung a Ten Commandments plaque on the wall of his courtroom behind his bench. Harvey Weinstein also has a common characteristic throughout the cartoons. In four of the cartoons, Weinstein is in various stages of undress – ranging from wearing a robe to wearing nothing, with a sword strategically placed to cover his anatomy. Even the cartoons where he is clothed, he rarely wears a tie and the top button of his shirt undone.

The final theme identified by Medhurst and Desousa (1981) is the situational theme, which may appear unexpectedly during the course of events. Oftentimes, these events have an immediate impact on the situation at hand, but without that context the cartoon can be difficult to understand, particularly by later generations. As the political cartoons explored here are so current, it is difficult to assess this aspect of the cartoons as the context surrounding sexual violence and the #MeToo movement continues to dominate national news.

Social Construction

Schneider and Ingram’s (1993) social construction theory is used to better understand the target populations of public policy. Schneider and Ingram use the political power and social construction of target groups to develop the theory. Target groups are those groups of people that will be impacted by the policy. These groups can have either strong or weak political power and be constructed as deserving or undeserving social construction. Based on this matrix, Schneider and Ingram develop four categories – advantaged (strong political power and deserving), dependents (weak political power and deserving), deviants (weak political power and undeserving), and contenders (strong political power and undeserving).

Drawing from the graphic analysis, the final set of results present the social construction of the primary participants depicted in the cartoons. In this analysis, six target groups were discovered and their social constructions are identified in Figure 1. The categorizations of these groups are based on the overall viewpoint of the cartoonists. However, some groups of people may see the represented participants differently.

Figure 1: Social Construction of Target Groups of #MeToo Movement in Political Cartoons

		Social Construction	
		Advantaged	Contenders
Political Power	Women		Elected officials Accused New & entertainment moguls
	Males Girls	Dependents	Deviants

Drawing on Schneider and Ingram (1997), the advantaged group consists of those with more political power and considered to be deserving. In general, the cartoonists demonstrated the collective of women who spoke up about their experiences of sexual harassment moved into the advantaged category. While individual voices were not being heard, their collective voices began to show power and through their cartoons, the artists suggest they deserved to be heard. This position is best portrayed in Luckovich’s cartoon showing the White House surrounded by women carrying pitchforks and torches (2017). Although women are categorized as advantaged in this analysis, it is at the lower end of the power scale as they did not gain power on this issue until the movement developed. This depiction of the women as advantaged may differ by the audience. While the cartoonists depicted them as advantaged, those who stood by the accused did not likely see the women as being deserving. One side of the women was not depicted in the cartoons – those who were

accused. Although a few women were accused of sexual harassment during the time period of the study, none of the cartoons showed these women.

Contenders are those with political power but seen as undeserving. The contenders in the #MeToo movement are the accused, elected officials in general, and news and entertainment moguls. By nature of their positions, those in the contender category have significant power not only in their work, but also on the American society as a whole. Most cartoonists depicted this power as undeserving, though, as they abused their power. Even those leaders in power who were not accused were depicted as undeserving because so many times they turned a blind eye to alleged abuse or stood behind their candidate despite the accusations.

Girls were portrayed as dependents in these cartoons. Dependents are those with less political power, but seen positively. Children and mothers have historically been considered to be dependents, evoking images of being loving, sweet, blameless and helpless (Schneider and Ingram, 2007). In the cartoons, the young girls are protected and there are hopes of a better future for them. Males, in general, are also in the dependent category. Unlike their counterparts in the contenders' group, these males are depicted as having little power. However, most of the males in this group are realizing that sexual harassment is a concern of theirs as fathers and husbands and that it is time to do something about it.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This analysis covered one snapshot in time of the #MeToo movement. Sexual harassment is still a dominant topic in today's news stories. More women have shared their stories. Bill Cosby has been sentenced for his sexual attacks on women. CBS Chief Les Moonves resigned after numerous women accused him of sexual misconduct. Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh was accused of sexual assault and his accuser testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee. This ongoing timeline suggests the analysis of cartoons stemming from this societal issue should be continued. How do the imagery and commentary change over the course of time? Do women gain more voice through these cartoons? What are the lasting effects of these cartoons?

Additionally, research looking back should also be conducted. For centuries, a patriarchal hierarchy was supported by cultural norms. Although more women joined the workforce in the 1960s, they could legally be paid less than men and gender could prevent them from work promotions (CarlAnthonyOnline, 2017). The 1960s marked a change in the workforce,

as more women were employed. Along with this came the image of the “swinging secretary” which suggested that the female workforce of the day was sexually permissive. One *Playboy* cartoon from 1966 suggested the pretty, voluptuous secretary, with notepad in hand, “Take an indecent proposal...” *Caper* magazine went a step further with the secretary baring her breasts as she sat dutifully next to her boss. (Images available on carlanthonyonline.com).

This type of analysis can also be conducted on other types of societal issues, such as gun violence and teachers pay. Further exploration of the role of political cartoons as they reflect society, and cause reflection on society, can lead to a better understanding of the role of humor in political and societal issues.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, the social construction of the primary characters depicted in these political cartoons is not surprising. Elected officials are often seen negatively, despite (or because of) the amount of power have. Similarly, women are often seen as contenders. What is interesting, though, is the wide disparity between the two categories. There was little to no middle ground. In almost all instances the politicians and moguls were seen in a negative way. Women were almost always seen in a way that spoke up for them, that deemed them worthy of being listened to and protected from future harassment. Yet, despite the #MeToo movement and the shift in views depicted in these cartoons, women are still facing sexual harassment and still are not believed when they share their stories.

The connection of humor and art, such as that seen in these political cartoons, can bring attention to an issue in a way that will help people open up to it and discuss. Whichever side of the issue you stand on, you are likely to react to the cartoon if you understand the context. These cartoons have given people the opportunity to reflect on an issue that is very difficult to discuss. It will be able to see if any of these cartoons stand the test of time and become an iconic image of the movement.

References

- Benson, S. (2017, December 18). The Graduate. (Editorial Cartoon). *The Arizona Republic*. CarlAnthonyOnline.com. (2017, October 18). *Swinging Sixties Secretaries & Sexual Harrassment: The 1967 Movie Musical that First Confronted It*. Retrieved from <https://carlantonhyonline.com/2017/10/18/the-swinging-sixties-secretary-1967-movie-musical-first-confronts-sexual-harrassment/>
- Cavna, M. (2017, July 20). "Analysis | Texas Now Has Zero Staff Political Cartoonists, as Houston Chronicle Fires Pulitzer Winner." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, Retrieved from www.washingtonpost.com/news/comic-riffs/wp/2017/07/20/texas-now-has-zero-staff-political-cartoonists-as-houston-chronicle-fires-pulitzerwinner/?utm_term=.7a4d70f4a833.
- Conners, J. L. (2010). Barack versus Hillary: Race, gender, and political cartoon imagery of the 2008 presidential primaries. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 54(3), 298-312.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299.
- Crenshaw, K. W., Delgado, R., Matsuda, M. J., & Lawrence, C. R. (2018). Introduction. In *Words That Wound* (pp. 1-15). Routledge.
- Davies, M. (2017, October 27). #MeToo. *Newsday* and *Andres McMeel Syndicate*.
- Johnson, C. A., Hawbaker, K.T., Stevenson, R., Moskop, S., and Hill, L. (2018, September 26). #MeToo: A timeline of events. *The Chicago Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/ct-me-too-timeline-20171208-htmlstory.html>
- Luckovich, M. (2017, December 12). Women at the White House. (Editorial Cartoon). *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.
- Manikonda, L., Beigi, G., Liu, H., & Kambhampati, S. (2018). Twitter for Sparking a Movement, Reddit for Sharing the Moment: #metoo through the Lens of Social Media. arXiv preprint arXiv:1803.08022.
- Marshall, A.-M. (2016). *Confronting Sexual Harassment: The Law and Politics of Everyday Life*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Medhurst, M. J., & Desousa, M. A. (1981). Political cartoons as rhetorical form: A taxonomy of graphic discourse. *Communications Monographs*, 48(3), 197-236.
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Sack, S. (2017, November 12). Bring out your dead careers!!! (Editorial Cartoon). *The Minneapolis Star Tribune*.
- Sack, S. (2017, October 22). #pleaseGodnothertoo. (Editorial Cartoon). *The Minneapolis Star Tribune*.
- Schultz, V. (1998). Reconceptualizing sexual harassment. *The Yale Law Journal*, 107(6), 1683-1805.
- Schultz, V. (2002). The sanitized workplace. *The Yale Law Journal*, 112, 2061.
- Schultz, V. (2018). Reconceptualizing Sexual Harassment, Again. *The Yale Law Journal Forum*, June 18, 2018, 22 – 66.
- Zarkov, D., & Davis, K. (2018). Ambiguities and dilemmas around# MeToo:# ForHow Long and# WhereTo?. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 25(1) 3-9.

ACADEMIC-BIOS



Dr. Outi Hakola is a senior researcher fellow in Area and Cultural Studies at the University of Helsinki, Finland. Her background is in media studies, and her research concentrates on questions of emotions and affects in films, television, and social media. She serves as a principal investigator on the research project “Creating and Challenging Populist Masculinities”, and is part of the research project “The Dark Side of Humor: Popular Culture and the Power of Ridicule”. Her recent publications include such articles as “How Pop Can Army Strong Be? Uses of Popular Culture in US Army Recruitment Campaign” (*Journal of Popular Culture*, 2018), and “Political Impersonations on *Saturday Night Live* during the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election” (*European Journal of American Studies*, 2017).



Leigh Nanney Hersey is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and program coordinator for the MPA program. She received her Ph.D. in Public Administration from Arizona State University in 2009, with a graduate certificate in Nonprofit Leadership & Management. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia in Journalism and her M.Ed. from Temple University in Athletic Administration. Dr. Hersey's teaching and research covers public and nonprofit administration, grant writing, civic engagement, and social media. Dr. Hersey has presented at numerous academic and professional conferences throughout the United States. She has several journal articles and book chapters, and recently co-edited a book on the arts and civic engagement. Prior to joining academia, she worked in the nonprofit sector for more than a dozen years. Dr. Hersey served on the City of Scottsdale (AZ) Parks and Recreation Commission, chairing the commission in 2004. In 2012 Dr. Hersey was nominated for the Volunteer Mid-South Spirit of Giving Award.



Claire Vidrine earned her undergraduate degree in Political Science from Louisiana Tech University and her Master of Public Administration from the University of Louisiana Monroe. She is currently pursuing her law degree from Mississippi College.



Hüseyin Çavuşođlu was born in 1977 in İzmir. Graduate education at the Dokuz Eylül University Department of History of the Republic of Turkey, he completed his doctoral studies at the same university again Comparative History of the program. Currently, he is working as a lecturer in Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University Department of Political Science and Public Administration.



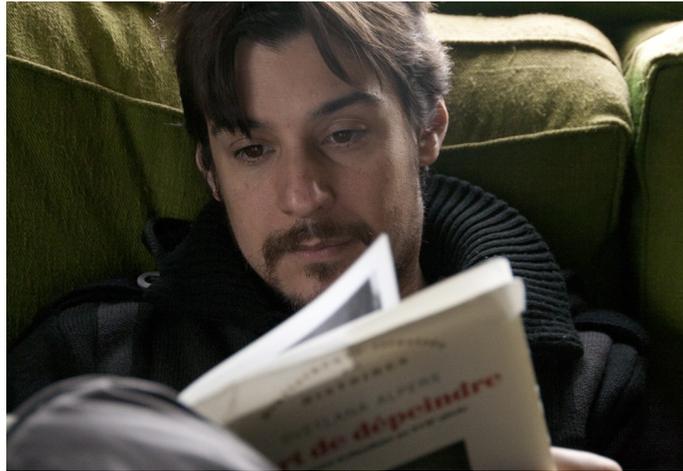
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özcan SEZER

He received her BA and MA from Abant Izzet Baysal University in Bolu/TURKEY and her Ph.D at Gazi University/TURKEY. In 2009, he was appointed as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Bülent Ecevit University in Zonguldak. In 2014 he received the title of Associate Professor in the field of Local Government, Urban and Environmental Policy. Currently, he is a faculty member at Bülent Ecevit University, Department of Political Science and Public Administration. He has various articles, international and national papers and book chapters on globalization, local governments, new management approaches, environmental issues and environmental ethics approaches, and general issues of public administration discipline.



Research Assistant Tuğçe Bayram

Tuğçe Bayram graduated from Süleyman Demirel University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Public Administration in 2011. She was appointed as a research assistant to Bülent Ecevit University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration during her master study at Süleyman Demirel University. Bayram, who started her PhD education in 2017, continues her duty at Süleyman Demirel University. Her areas of interest include politics, bureaucracy theories, management science and public policy.



Dr. Cristian Palacios has a Linguistic PhD with honors from the University of Buenos Aires, is researcher for CONICET (The National Scientific and Technical Research Council of Argentina) in the fields of Discourse Analysis, Semiotics, Linguistics and Studies of Theatre, Comics, Literature and Art in general. He is researcher for the Linguistics Institute of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) and professor in the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature of the University of Buenos Aires and in the National University of Arts (UNA). Cristian is also writer, actor, playwright and theater director. He has published several academic books, two novels, two books of poetry, numerous plays, and more than thirty scholarly articles in various books and specialized national and international magazines. He received an Honorable Mention of the University of Buenos Aires for his Academic Work and multiple awards for his artistic work. His last book *Hacia una teoría del teatro para niños* [Towards a theory of theatre for children] has received two awards as the best academic work in the field of theatre by ATINA association and the foundation ALIJA-IBBY. His doctoral thesis, was about the work of the humorist, cartoonist and writer Roberto Fontanarrosa (*La dimension ideológica del humor en la obra de Roberto Fontanarrosa* [The ideological dimension of humour in the work of Roberto Fontanarrosa]). He also published *El discurso humorístico. Aproximaciones al estudio del humor y lo cómico* and *Discurso, memoria, identidad. Intervenciones sobre el fenómeno de la Violencia*.



Dr. Jarno Hietalahti is a post-doctoral researcher at the University Jyväskylä, Finland. His main field of interest is social philosophy, especially Frankfurt School's Critical Theory. Hietalahti's current research focuses on the philosophy of humor and humanistic thinking. He has published a doctoral dissertation (2016) and various peer-reviewed and non-reviewed articles on the problem of humor and humanism.



Jolita Horbačiauskienė, Dr., is a professor at Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania. Her academic interests include translation studies, lexicology, innovative language teaching/learning methodologies and EMI issues.



Ramunė Kasperavičienė is professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities of Kaunas University of Technology, expert at Kaunas Biomedical Research Ethics Committee. Her expertise is within translation studies, new media language, foreign language learning and teaching and digital literacy. She is also a practicing translator, interpreter and language editor.



2019

<http://www.uc.pt/fluc/uidief>



COMEDY FOR DINNER and other dishes

Outi Hakola | Leigh Nanney Hersey | Claire Vidrine
Özcan Sezer | Tuğçe Bayram | Hüseyin Çavuşoğlu
Cristian Palacios | Jarno Hietalahti
Jolita Horbačasienė | Ramunė Kasperavičienė



2019