

Call for papers

Satire Across Borders **International Conference** **January 17-18, 2013** **Utrecht University, The Netherlands**

On **January 17 and 18, 2013** the research group *The Power of Satire* will host the international conference *Satire Across Borders*, at Utrecht University.

Satire has the ability to contest cultural boundaries in several ways. By addressing political topics or touching upon sensitive issues within a society (e.g. religious and sexual taboos), satirical works intervene in on going cultural debates. This is but one of the reasons why these works can be considered as *interculturally* charged. By mixing multiple media within one work, or by creatively transposing styles and techniques from one medium to another, satire shows that it can also contest medial boundaries, i.e. that it can be considered as *intermedially* charged as well. These two conditions, *interculturality* and *intermediality*, have framed the functioning of satire in the past and continue to do so in the present. They turn satire into a rather ambiguous phenomenon, for both its producers and its consumers. This assumed ambiguity of satire forms the point of departure of the international conference *Satire Across Borders*.

Satire's ability to cross borders will be addressed from five different perspectives:

1) *Time*

In a historical perspective, satire seems to manifest itself at very specific occasions, for example during officially sanctioned festive activities (carnival, harvest rituals) or in moments of political crisis (during revolts, civil wars, religious upheavals etc.). How do these temporal conditions influence and define the functioning of satire? Is satire bound by such conditions, or does it also contest them?

2) *Space*

Although western society today seems to be rather tolerant towards satire, controversies still occur every now and then and censorship is sometimes called for. This suggests that the freedom of satirical expression is limited to certain zones, like the ritual context of carnival or the performative space of the television screen or, more generally, the (ideal) public space as one which establishes reciprocal understanding between its participants. What happens if satire crosses the borders of these zones? And can the establishment of these zones also lead to the inclusion or exclusion of certain audiences?

3) *Target*

One characteristic of satire is that it is always aimed at someone or something, i.e. that it has one or several targets. These can vary from royal figures and political/religious authorities to social taboos, cultural practices and moral values. Are there any general patterns to be discerned in the qualities of these targets themselves, and in the manner in which they are approached by satire? Does satire always contest its targets, or can it also legitimize them in one way or another?

4) *Media*

Satire is not bound to one medium or genre. On the contrary, it often combines multiple media or refers to the conventions of several styles or genres at the same time. How does this intermediality influence satire's functioning in society? Does it limit or instead extend the potential audiences of satire? And what role do the material forms (manuscript, printing press, television, internet) of specific satirical works play in all this?

5) *Rhetoric*

Certain techniques, tactics and rhetorical figures recur time and again in satire, such as humour, irony, parody, burlesque and caricature. Such rhetorical techniques seem to play a pivotal role in the production and reception of satire. Historically speaking, to what extent can the use of them be called cyclical? And in what way do they contribute to satire's ability to contest cultural boundaries?

The conference language will be English.

The organizers of this conference invite all potential contributors to submit a proposal of **200-250 words** for a conference paper.

To be eligible for acceptance, the proposal should meet the following conditions:

- The topic of the proposed paper fits within one of the five perspectives listed above; this perspective is specified in the proposal
- If modern/recent satire is the focus, the proposed paper also contains a historical component and vice versa
- The proposed paper should take up *no more than 20 minutes* to present

Please attach to your proposal

- A short CV (including your current affiliation)
- A (small) list of relevant and recent publications
- A recent photo of yourself

Proposals should be submitted by **June 1, 2012** at the latest to powerofsatire@gmail.com

By July 1, 2012 you will receive a message of confirmation or dismissal of your proposal from the organizers of the conference.

As a contributor you will not be charged for your participation. The organizers will invite you cordially to the conference dinner on the first day (January 17), but they are sorry to inform you that it is only possible to cover the costs of travel and accommodation for the invited four keynote speakers.

For more information about the research programme *The Power of Satire. Cultural boundaries contested*: <http://www.powerofsatire.org/> As from July 2012 the conference schedule, confirmed keynote speakers and regular updates with other information about the conference will be announced there as well.

The Power of Satire is hosted by **Utrecht University** and the **University of Amsterdam**, and funded by the **Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO)**.

Conference organizers

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