Humour in the Beginning

Cultural Interaction of Laughter and the Comic in the First Phase of Asian religions, Christianity and Islam

International conference
Soeterbeeck centre
(Ravenstein, the Netherlands)

Organisers:
Dr Roald Dijkstra
Prof Dr Paul van der Velde

Radboud Universiteit
Monday 4 March 2019

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<td>Drinks</td>
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<td>19.30-</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
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Tuesday 5 March 2019

**Session 1 - Humour and the other: superior laughter**

*Chair: Paul van der Velde (Radboud Universiteit)*

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<td>9.00-9.15</td>
<td>Roald Dijkstra (Radboud Universiteit)</td>
<td><em>Humour in the beginning</em></td>
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<td>9.15-10.00</td>
<td>Bernard Schweizer (Long Island University)</td>
<td>Laughter and boundaries: Distinguishing liminal from entrenchment humor</td>
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<td>10.00-10.45</td>
<td>Ulrich Marzolph (Georg August Universität Göttingen)</td>
<td>Greek and Buddhist Jokes in Classical Arabic Literature</td>
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<td>11.10-12.05</td>
<td>Key-note Anne Ingvild Gilhus (Universitetet i Bergen)</td>
<td>Derisive laughter and religious identity in ancient Christianity: Examples from Nag Hammadi texts</td>
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<td>13.30-14.15</td>
<td>Pierluigi Lanfranchi (Aix-Marseille Université - MMSH)</td>
<td>The smile of the martyr</td>
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<td>14.15-15.00</td>
<td>Ali Hussein (University of Haifa)</td>
<td>Expiatory humor in a pre-Islamic poem by Ilba’ b. Arqam</td>
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Session 2 - Religion, humour and performance
Chair: Matthijs den Dulk (Radboud Universiteit)

15.20-16.15  **Key-note** Inger Kuin (Darmouth College):
*Laughter, performance, and religion: Playing with the gods in the Roman Empire*

16.15-17.00 Roald Dijkstra (Radboud Universiteit):
*Christians and comedians. Late antique theatre and Christian responses*

17.00-17.10  **Mini break**

17.10-17.55 Moses Glorino & Misnal Munir (Unversitas Airlangga/Universitas Gadjah Mada):
*Humor Ludruk and indigenous ritual religion in Indonesia*

18.30  Departure to restaurant
19.00-  Dinner downtown: *Restaurant Versaen* (Marktstraat 19, Ravenstein)

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Session 3 - Time to laugh? Reflections on humour
Chair: tba

9.15-10.10  Floris Bernard (Universiteit Gent):
*Laughter, smiles, and the development of Christian bodily behavior in the Greek Church Fathers*

10.10-10.55 Nicole Graham (University of Kent):
*Opponent or advocate?: Exploring Clement of Alexandria’s attitude(s) towards laughter*

10.55-11.15 Coffee/tea

11.15-12.00 Michel Dijkstra (Radboud Universiteit):
*Crack a joke, split your ego. Humour as gateway to enlightenment in Chan Buddhism*

12.00-12.45 Farooq Hassan (NED University of Engineering & Technology/Georgetown University):
*Humour and its Ethics: Reflections from Early Islamic Era*

12.45-14.00 Lunch
Session 4: Laughter and humour in verse and narrative

Chair: tba

14.00-14.55 **Key-note** Geert Jan van Gelder (University of Oxford):
*Poetic Parodies of Islamic Discourses by Abū Nuwās (d. c. 813)*

14.55-15.40 Reuven Kiperwasser (The Melton Centre For Jewish Education, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem/Ariel University):
*Mocking God and Laughing Rabbis*

15.40-16.00 Coffee/tea

16.00-16.45 Vincent Hunink (Radboud Universiteit):
*The Cena Cypriani*

18.00 Drinks

19.00 Dinner

**Thursday 7 March 2019**

Session 5: Contested images

Chair: Roald Dijkstra (Radboud Universiteit)

9.00-10.00 **Key-note** Yasmin Amin (University of Exeter):
*Laughing God between Sunni Acceptance and Shia Rejection*

10.00-10.45 Paul van der Velde (Radboud Universiteit):
*The Buddha, the brahmins and the shramanas*

10.45-11.05 Coffee/tea

11.05-11.50 Bernard Schweizer (Long Island University):
*Tracing the Development of Religious Comedy from Dante to David Javerbaum*

11.50-12.00 Roald Dijkstra & Paul van der Velde (Radboud Universiteit):
*Closure*

12.00-13.00 Lunch

Departure
Sponsors

We thank the following institutions and foundations that enabled us to organise this conference:

National Research School in Classical Studies, The Netherlands;
Research Group Impact of Empire

Department of Classics
Faculty of Arts, Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies
Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies

Stichting Sormani Fonds
Practicalities

Our venue is an old convent turned into a conference centre for Radboud University. Soeterbeeck is beautifully located in the meadows of Ravenstein, near Nijmegen (the Netherlands), and is situated at walking distance from the Ravenstein railway station (plan your journey at https://www.ns.nl). The address is: Elleboogstraat 2, 5371 LL Ravenstein (+3124361 59 99). Ravenstein can easily be reached by train (two trains p/h) from Nijmegen or ’s Hertogenbosch (= Den Bosch). From the railway station you can walk to Soeterbeeck by taking a small path (Stationspad) leading through the meadows (the path opposite of the side where some buildings seem to indicate a village). At the end you go to the right and then to the right again (here the route is signposted).

To get to Ravenstein by car plan your journey at www.routenet.nl or see www.ru.nl/soeterbeeck/informatie-contact/routebeschrijving.
**Speaker/chairs:** The costs for the stay, including breakfast, lunch, dinner and drinks indicated on the programme, are covered for all speakers and chairs. Other expenses are not covered.

**Visitors** who want to attend the conference without giving a presentation are warmly invited to do so! Attendance is free. Visitors are also welcome for lunch (€15,-) and dinner (€30,-; these costs are to be paid in cash on location). **Students** attending at least one session are offered free lunch.

*If you have any questions,*  
*feel free to contact*  
Roald Dijkstra  
(r.dijkstra@let.ru.nl / 0620534884)