

## **Humour & Politics Workshop 2022 in Magdeburg [14-15 September]**

09.09.2022 - **Humour & Politics Workshop 2022 at the OVGU Magdeburg Changing landscapes: From humour and politics to humour as politics**

**14-15 September**

Social Sciences and other disciplines recently discovered the funny side of politics as topic worthy of scientific attention. The trend of using strategic humour in political communication, campaigns or attacks of adversaries is of special interest, especially in times of uncertainty, crisis and autocratization. Humour has for a long time been associated with resistance and being a weapon of the weak and therefore, often positive characteristics are ascribed to it. While it has previously been seen as revolutionary it is increasingly seen as counter-revolutionary due to its disincentivising and camouflaging effects. For example, researchers have become increasingly interested in strategies involving satire and comedy which play a key role in the transformation of the public sphere and the self-representation of new authoritarian and populist leaders ascribed to. Others have started looking at the role of emotions in humour used by political leaders, movements and parties. Overall, the workshop wishes to contribute to this increasing interest by bringing together papers which examine the (new) role and function of humour in public culture and politics.

Amongst others, following questions are of interest:

- ▶ How can various disciplines contribute to a systematization of different styles and genres of humour?
- ▶ What can we learn from a performative lens on humour?
- ▶ How can political humour be investigated from an aesthetic perspective in performance and popular culture?
- ▶ How is humour connected to the debate about emotions in political communication and how can humour cause emotions?
- ▶ What can be said about the role of satirists and comedians in politics?
- ▶ How can humour be integrated in theoretical concepts like carnival, populism, authoritarianism, liberalism?
- ▶ How is humour used by the powerful in politics, society and various forms of organizations as a form of defence/insulation against criticism?
- ▶ How does humour contribute to uncertainty and the (de-)legitimation of (political) ideas?
- ▶ How can the recently successful figure of tricksters and clownish figures be connected to legitimacy?
- ▶ How is humour related to fake news, post-truth, attention and shareability?
- ▶ How does humour work in times of crisis? Does political humour decrease or increase uncertainty and ontological security?
- ▶ What does humour do in times of uncertainty and autocratization and how does it function in debates?
- ▶ How can the changing landscape of humour in the public sphere be transferred to fields like conflict resolution, tolerance, feminism, anti-racism and migration?

This workshop is interdisciplinary and we hope to address scholars who explore questions regarding the politics and constitution of humour from various disciplines such as political science, sociology, linguistics, literature theory, visual anthropology as well as film studies, media studies and visual culture.

The 2-day workshop will take place at Otto-von-Guericke University in Magdeburg, Germany and is open to any theoretical or methodological approach. We welcome paper proposals from people at any stage of their academic career. The aim is to gather papers for a special issue in a leading international journal. Travel expenses (up to 250€) and accommodation in Magdeburg will be covered by the workshop organizers.

### **Organizers:**

Alexander Spencer (Magdeburg University)

Daniel Beck (Magdeburg University)