

## Symposium on Korean humor, 21–22 May 2020, Palacký University Olomouc

The Korean section of the Department of Asian Studies in Olomouc is organizing a symposium on Korean humor, 21–22 May 2020, and invites proposals from potential participants. Besides attracting scholars who define themselves explicitly as researchers of Korean humor, in organizing this symposium we hope to stimulate proposals from other Koreanists who have relevant ideas or research, including work in progress.

Korean humor is by no means under-researched insofar as it pertains to traditional genres of entertainment (oral literature, mask play, etc.), and various essentialist conceptualizations of “Korean humor” have been in the air for decades. However, we would like to focus in this symposium on **modern and contemporary manifestations of humor in Korea**. Likewise, while our symposium does not wish to add to essentialist definitions of “Korean humor,” critical explorations of **ongoing discourses about Korean humor** will be very welcome.

We hope that this symposium will be a truly convivial time of intensive exchange among participants. Across the two days, the symposium schedule will comprise: (1) **scholarly sessions** consisting of short paper presentations alternating with inspiring academic discussion; (2) a lighthearted “**popular session**” showcasing and explaining examples of Korean humor, which will be open to a wider audience and cater especially to our students. Items might include, for example, a set of Korean jokes, cartoons, humorous advertisements, or whatever is of most interest to the presenter – together with some explanation or commentary on language and content.

Humor studies covers an interdisciplinary area, as humor pertains to numerous academic fields – e.g., communication and media studies, sociology and anthropology, social and cognitive psychology, history, literature and linguistics, popular culture and folklore. Likewise, humor is a multifaceted phenomenon, and for our symposium we hope to bring together research on a wide variety of its aspects, from many different fields. While by no means exhaustive, an indicative list of topics includes:

- Discourse on laughter in contemporary Korea
- Humor appreciation in Korean culture
- Changing tastes: Debates about “the same old jokes”
- Political correctness and comedy
- Forms of Korean humor in comparative context
- Mass popular comedy versus niche modes
- “Canned” jokes and “humor series”
- Translation of Western comedy
- Contemporary humorists and literary humor
- Satirical humor
- Visual humor & cartoons
- New media and social media: Their influence on humor
- Memes and other internet-specific genres of humor
- North Korean humor
- South Korean jokes about North Korea

We invite submission of proposals until **10 February 2020**, by email to [andreas.schirmer@upol.cz](mailto:andreas.schirmer@upol.cz). Proposals should comprise an abstract of 300 words, a short bio of up to 100 words, and an indication regarding willingness to contribute to the “popular session” (and, if so, a brief explanation of what form this might take). Taking an “entertainment slot” is not compulsory, but we hope that the majority of participants will be willing to prepare an item for both educational and amusement value!

For invited participants we will provide three nights' accommodation in Olomouc. We have a limited budget for travel which will be negotiated individually on acceptance of proposals.

This symposium is organized as part of a Seed Program for Korean Studies project, for which Palacky University Olomouc has received a grant from the Korean Studies Promotion Service (Academy of Korean Studies).