Humour as a Language for Cultural Dialogue

In any particular culture, humour defines the limits of those cultural fields that can never be taken lightly, the taboos we can never make fun of: once we know the limits for humour, we also know what remains off those limits. Recent events of global relevance (the Danish cartoon crisis being the best remembered) show how these limits are subject to struggle, precisely in terms of humour “causing” angry, even violent responses which try to re-establish the seriousness of the subject matter made fun of.

The paper I’m proposing would attempt to provide a theoretical explanation for the role of humour in any cultural confrontation in Western societies: how it is related to a particular intellectual tradition, and how it reflects the changes and challenges faced by such tradition (postmodernity, globalisation, etc).