

Lidija Bencetić, *Komunizam u slici* [*Communism in image*], (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2017)

Summary

The important role the press has in modern society arises from its position: it is a “bridge” between the authorities and citizens, it presents the government’s views to the general public, and also the public’s view to the government. As a component of the press (journalism), the caricature also presents standpoints, the public’s standpoints in democratic societies, and those of the authorities in autocracies. This research focuses on political caricature. In terms of its specifics, it belongs to a socially engaged caricature and as such it strives, using witty presentation, to unmask social, most frequently political negatives, expose to ridicule the actions of those responsible for events or the social situation, or simply assume the role of a medium for promoting certain ideas, thus influencing public opinion and encouraging change. Also important are social caricatures which, like political ones, belong to a socially engaged caricature. However, they do not encroach upon political issues, but rather put socio—economic topics in focus.

The research covers the period of communist Yugoslavia from the foundation of the state in 1945 until 1962, when a new information system was put in place and a new Constitution adopted the following year. Papers analysed include the Belgrade-based daily *Borba* — the organ of the government issued in the centre of power, and the Zagreb-based daily *Vjesnik* — as the leading paper of one of the republics constituting Yugoslavia.

Milorad Ćirić is the caricaturist who left the greatest mark on caricatures published in *Borba*. In addition, other major caricaturists in *Borba* were Dragan Savić and Zoran Jovanović. Otto Reisinger is the caricaturist who left a deep mark on the *Vjesnik* caricature, not only in the period analysed but until the 1990s. Vilim Ćerić, Vladimir Delač, Borivoj Dovniković, Nedeljko Dragić, Zlatko Grgić, Ivo Kušanić, Alfred Pal and Ico Voljevica are caricaturists who also published in *Vjesnik*. Most of the caricaturists were participants of



the People's Liberation Struggle. In terms of ethnic affiliation, *Vjesnik* mostly published caricatures by Croatian caricaturists and *Borba* by Serbian ones, with a few exceptions — valid for both papers — of caricaturists from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the period under analysis, *Vjesnik* published 3,487 caricatures and *Borba* 2,550. Caricatures of the character named Pero, which were published 580 times in the period under analysis, also had impact on the number of caricatures published in *Vjesnik*. Caricatures published in *Borba* were divided into the following groups: foreign policy; socio—economic issues; the Catholic Church; caricatures taken over from other papers; other topics. *Vjesnik's* caricatures were divided into the following groups: foreign policy; socio—economic issues; the Catholic Church; Pero; taken over from other papers; and other topics.

The foreign policy section of *Borba's* caricatures covered the following themes: the Second World War; US foreign policy; UK foreign policy; France's foreign policy; Germany; peace conferences; colonialism; nuclear armament; Yugoslavia and the Informbiro; Trieste and the border issue with Italy, other foreign policy topics.

Vjesnik's foreign policy section dealt with the following topics: US foreign policy; UK foreign policy, France's foreign policy; the issue of Germany, peace conferences and the Cold War; Yugoslavia and the Informbiro; Trieste and the border issue with Italy; other foreign policy topics.

Borba's socio-economic section covered the following topics: problems in Yugoslavia's economy; issues of cooperatives and agriculture, food, catering and housing; tourism; culture; other socio-economic issues.

Vjesnik's socio-economic section contained the following topics: issues of cooperatives and status of the village; bureaucracy and the economic situation; negative social phenomena (nepotism, status of women, alcoholism); tourism; culture; other socio-economic issues.

Both papers dedicated most space to foreign policy caricatures. Afterwards, in *Borba* are caricatures taken over from other papers, socioeconomic caricatures and those on relations with the Catholic Church. The second most represented group of caricatures in *Vjesnik* was the one featuring the character named Pero, followed by those taken over from other papers, socio-economic caricatures and those on relations with the Catholic Church.

Most foreign policy topics covered in *Borba* and *Vjesnik* are identical: US foreign policy, UK foreign policy, France's foreign policy, Germany and peace conferences. The difference is that *Borba* allotted space to issues related to the time of the Second World War, and *Vjesnik* gave more emphasis to the Cold

War and its manifested forms. Both papers allotted much space to issue of relations between Yugoslavia and the Informbiro, and the issue of Trieste and the border with Italy.

Vjesnik published two and a half times more caricatures on the topic of relations between Yugoslavia and the countries of the Informbiro than *Borba*, specifically *Vjesnik* 245 and *Borba* 92 caricatures. Both papers focussed on the injustice that was happening to Yugoslavia, made attempts to justify the actions and standpoint of the Yugoslav leadership, mocked the personality cult of Joseph Stalin and presented the unequal relations within the Eastern Bloc, where the Soviet Union was dominant. Besides joint topics, there were also some to which each paper paid more attention. Thus, *Borba* focussed on the negative media campaign by the countries of the Eastern Bloc, wanting to explain that the accusations were unfounded. *Vjesnik* denied the Informbu-ro's accusations with its caricatures, but did not give emphasis to the media campaign against Yugoslavia as *Borba* did. *Borba* devoted much space to presenting and unmasking social and political circumstances in the Soviet Union. *Vjesnik* did not analyse social and political relations in the Soviet Union.

Both papers published caricatures on relations with Italy and the issue of the Free Territory of Trieste in the key years when decisions on the border issue were made — in 1945 and 1946, and then in 1952 and 1953. In both cycles, caricatures attempted to discredit the Italian Government and Prime Minister De Gasperi, comparing them with Mussolini's Fascist government. In the second cycle, *Vjesnik*'s attacks were more directed towards Western allies than Italy, considering that they unambiguously supported Italy.

With reference to socio-economic issues, both papers gave emphasis to Yugoslavia's economy and the issues of cooperatives and agriculture. Furthermore, both papers caricatured problems in tourism and culture. They differed however with regard to the issue of bureaucracy and negative social phenomena. *Vjesnik* covered nepotism, alcoholism and the status of women, whereas *Borba* gave more space to the issues of housing, feeding and catering.

As early as 1945, *Borba* began to settle accounts with the Catholic Church. *Vjesnik* published the first caricature on the topic in 1946. However, generally, *Vjesnik* published more caricatures on the topic, 135, compared to *Borba*'s 53. Both papers allotted most space to this issue in the years of the trial of Archbishop Stepinac (1946) and when he was appointed Cardinal (1952). In the remaining period, both *Borba* and *Vjesnik* sporadically published caricatures on the topic, but there was no systematic campaign against the Church.

Both papers allotted much space to caricatures taken over from other papers, almost identical in terms of numbers: *Borba* published 468 such caricatures, and *Vjesnik* 477. This makes 18 per cent of the total number of published

caricatures in *Borba* and 14 per cent in *Vjesnik*. Both papers took over caricatures from the US, English, French, Western German, Soviet and Yugoslav media. *Borba* also published caricatures taken over from the official organ of the Communist Party of China. These caricatures covered foreign policy topics that were also dealt with by Croatian/Yugoslav caricaturists.

From the remaining themes of *Vjesnik* and *Borba* caricatures, some were identical and some were different. Both papers covered the Second World War and presentation of individual personalities — Ante Pavelić, King Peter, Draža Mihailović, Milan Nedić etc. Both papers also published caricatures on the topic of the Non—Aligned Movement and its role in the world, as well as Yugoslavia's role in it. *Vjesnik* covered the issue of the Slovenian national minority in Carinthia, the so-called Space Race, topics from sports and “settling accounts” with foreign media reporting on Yugoslavia. *Borba* focussed on “Italian jealousy” towards the Balkan Pact and its fear of it.

As far as the critical position of caricatures in the long-run is concerned, it can be concluded that they retained the same or similar level of criticism in the entire period under analysis. However, with time they expanded significantly the areas of interest, especially socio-economic issues, where they touched upon many social problems. In the period under analysis, caricaturists became increasingly free in terms of being allowed to caricature a broader range of topics, but continued to have restrictions with regard to forbidden topics (state leadership, the People's Liberation Struggle, inter-ethnic relations). In *Borba* and *Vjesnik* caricatures, there were no presentations of domestic politicians, except for Josip Broz Tito, who was depicted positively, primarily in relation to the policy of the Non-Aligned Movement. There was no mention of ethnicities in the caricatures, and among religions they referred only to the Catholic faith. There was no reference to the communist system, but social negatives such as bureaucracy and the conduct of some anonymous managers were criticized. There was also criticism which was not directed towards anyone in particular, due to many social and economic shortcomings. The publication of many caricatures was declined, but the only forbidden one was Reisinger's presentation of Nikita Khrushchev in a barber's shop, published in 1958 in *Vjesnik u srijedu*. The court ordered this issue to be withdrawn from circulation.

Caricatures played an important role in *Borba* and *Vjesnik*. This conclusion is based on the mere fact that they were published in newspapers on a continual basis (except for the period immediately following the publication of the Resolution of the Informbiro), and on their position inside the papers. They were often published on front or second page. A certain number of caricatures were extensions of articles, which were most frequently published on the same page as caricatures, with the purpose of additionally emphasising the articles' message.