

A Kingdom of Laughs: The Satirical Magazine *Koprive* and the Political, Social and Cultural Climate in the Early 20th Century Croatia

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1. Introductory remarks

It is not unusual that politically and socially turbulent times give birth to or popularize certain cultural formations. Those formations could be new media or art forms. Likewise, social and political changes usually signalize a change in mentalities. The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century in the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia – a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – is marked with great political turmoil, an event that will initiate a flourishing of the newspaper scene. During this process, two new significant newspapers shall emerge – the weekly/daily newspaper *Pokret (Movement)* and the satirical magazine *Koprive (Stinging Nettles)*. Conceptually, both publications took cues from their predecessors. But *Koprive*, as its name implies, would become especially significant because of its outrageous humoristic approach and harsh critique of everyday social and political events.

When utilized in a certain way, humor – or to be more specific, satire – can effectively locate and dissect problems which plague societies. Aristophanes, Voltaire, Charles Chaplin or the Monty Pythons, each of these satirists possessed a talent for uncovering moral, social and political authorities, whose continuous existence rested on corrupt and out-dated foundations. As the Croatian humorist Fadil Hadžić remarked, satire decorates the face of a reader/viewer/listener with a conspirator's smile, at which point he joins the "conspiracy" of the satirists against the forces that rule the world.¹ Among the forms of satire, a caricature (cartoon) is an especially efficient means of presenting the essence of certain problems, in the shape of an exaggerated humorous illustration. The success of an idea presented by a quality

¹ HADŽIĆ, Fadil. Anatomija smijeha: studije o fenomenu komičnoga. Zagreb: V.B.Z., 1998, p. 55.

cartoonist lies in his ability to express his critique in a brief and hilarious manner. The meaning of the word “caricature” comes from the Latin word *caricare*, which means “to exaggerate”. Caricature purposely exaggerates, so that we may have a better look at the world around us. The caricature isn’t always funny. At times it can be sad, serious, dark and even creepy. Its palette has a wide range of tones, from cheery to dark.²

It is the caricatures that are at the heart of magazine *Koprive*, in all of its various degrees, depending on the topic they’re covering. As has already been noted, *Koprive* aren’t the first satirical magazine in Croatia, but they emerged in a specific period, under specific circumstances. By examining these circumstances, as well as analyzing the magazine’s content during its earliest years, we may come to understand its role in Croatia’s popular culture at the turn of the century.

2. The newspaper *Pokret*

From 1883 to 1903 the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia was governed by the viceroy Károly Khuen-Héderváry. Because of various political reasons related to both Budapest and Vienna, Khuen-Héderváry was given the assignment to transform Croatia into an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary. He proclaimed new laws which enabled him to paralyze political life and media.³ Critical journalism wasn’t tolerated. More than 5000 newspaper editions were confiscated during his reign. Some publications were banned from selling in libraries and newsstands. Editors were even sentenced to serve time in prison.⁴ A turbulent event at the turn of the century – the crisis of the Dual Monarchy – led to Khuen-Héderváry’s resignation. This act reignited the political and social life in Croatia. New political ideas and groups emerged. Most of the significant parties started publishing their own newspapers, so as to crystalize and promote their views and goals. Especially impactful were the rise of politician Frano Supilo and his reorganized version of the newspaper *Novi list* (*New Paper*), published in Rijeka. *Novi list* served as an ideological and technical inspiration for other publications.⁵ Supilo’s paper

² HADŽIĆ, ref. 1, p. 121.

³ ŠIDAK, Jaroslav et al. *Povijest hrvatskog naroda g. 1860.-1914*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1968, pp. 123-124.

⁴ NOVAK, Božidar. *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću*. Zagreb: Golden marketing – Tehnička knjiga, 2005, p. 48.

⁵ HORVAT, Josip. *Povijest novinstva Hrvatske 1771.-1939*. Zagreb: Golden marketing – Tehnička knjiga, 2003, p. 292.

was the main outlet of the new political movement – “The New Course” – and all the political problems were observed through its lens. Decisions made in Vienna were criticized if they were perceived as harmful for the Croats. Croatian political groups working for the benefit of Viennese efforts – such as clericalists and Frankists – were repeatedly named and attacked in their texts. Furthermore, Supilo issued a proclamation on January 1st 1904, meant for new, emerging forces. He invited them to intensify their presence in the country’s political life.⁶ Inspired by this call, a new publication would appear – *Pokret*.

The first edition of the weekly *Pokret* was published on April 1904. It was the outlet of a political group called “naprednjaci” (“Progressives”), which separated itself from the Party of Rights. Milan Heimerl was one of the owners of the newspaper and its editor-in-chief. Milivoj Dežman – a noted author of Croatian modernist literature – was the editor of the newspaper during its first year. At the end of 1904, the group that gathered around the newspaper came out with a program for a new political formation, the Croatian Progressive Party. Democracy was the new party's main principle, and its objective was that „based on our country's statehood status, the party will strive to maintain the functioning of the [Croatian–Hungarian] Settlement in those matters where our right is most clearly expressed, as well as to protect our people from clericalist forces“.⁷ The intellectual youth was the party’s main supporters. They didn’t gain any support from urban classes, since they were unaccustomed to democratic ideas. Yet, the party’s political activities were quite strong, so they maintained a high level of influence on the opposition and the country’s political life in general. Besides, they were the main allies of the political movement of the “New Course”, which was being established in Dalmatia.⁸ The Progressives were trying to organize their party and the accompanying newspaper. In 1905 they’ve founded the Croatian Publishing and Printing Shareholder Society, which took over *Pokret* and continued to publish it as a daily in the offices of Većeslav Vilder. The founders of the Progressives' publishing society were Heimerl, Dežman, Vilder, Ivan Ancel and Lav Mazzura in Zagreb; Živko Bertić in Zemun; Vicko Ilijadica in Šibenik; Ivan Poljak in Valpovo; Ivan Lorković in Osijek; and Iso Velikanović in Mitrovica.⁹

Evidently, the newspaper was the main outlet for Progressives from around the country. *Pokret* cooperated with young literary authors, such as Antun Gustav Matoš and Ivan

⁶ GANZA-ARAS, Tereza. Politika "novog kursa" dalmatinskih pravaša oko Supila i Trumbića. Split: Matica hrvatska, 1992, p. 237-238.

⁷ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 292.

⁸ ŠIDAK, ref. 3, pp. 220.

⁹ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 292.

Kozarac. But most prominently, they've cooperated with journalists and writers from Dalmatia and Istra, such as Milan Begović, Josip Kosor and Milan Marjanović. The Progressives tried to gain support from students, so they published a series of articles entitled *From the Life of Students*. One of the newspaper's defining traits was its battle against clericalist ideas. They've clashed with the clericalists in a series of texts entitled *From the Furtimist Camp*. Politically, *Pokret* was encouraging the cooperation of Croats and Serbs, who found themselves in a conflict over Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was controlled by dualist Austro-Hungarian proconsuls and the Austro-Hungarian ministry of finance.¹⁰

3. The satirical magazine *Koprive*

During his regime, viceroy Khuen-Héderváry was thorough in his attempt to control the media. He didn't just target critical journalism, but satirical magazines as well. State censorship fought against attempts to ridicule the viceroy or his reign.¹¹ In this context, the political changes that took place with the elections of 1906 marked a symbolic break with the ideas and practices of the former viceroy. With the lack of censorship, it seems that the intellectuals took a more daring approach. The new political climate gave birth to new self-consciousness and individualism. A prominent harbinger of these changes was the satirical magazine *Koprive*. The publication was started on June 15th 1906 by a group of Progressives gathered around the newspaper *Pokret*. In the beginning it was published as *Pokret*'s supplement. Its first editors-in-chief were Edo Marković and Milan Gračanin.¹² Zagreb's Kazališna kavana (Theater Cafe) was the true location of the magazine's editorial. It was a meeting place for young intellectuals, and their jokes gave birth to caricatures and puns. Because of the surrounding in which the jokes were formed, many were theatrically-themed.¹³

One of the magazine's most prominent characteristics was its complete lack of respect for the highest authorities – the emperor Franz Joseph I; the Catholic Church; the army; the high bureaucratic society; the bourgeoisie; and even the peasants. Some might argue that their

¹⁰ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 292-293.

¹¹ ŠTEFANAC, Tamara. Cenzurirani ilustrirani materijal u hrvatskim časopisima u vrijeme banovanja Károlya Khuena Hédervárya (1883.-1903.). In *Libellarium: Časopis za povijest pisane riječi, knjige i baštinskih ustanova*, 2011, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 23-38.

¹² HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 304.

¹³ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 306.

sense of humor was borderline anarchic. One of the caricatures portrays Franz Joseph I, helplessly sitting on a branch of a frail old tree. The joke was probably inspired by the German verse “Auf dem Ast da sitzt ein Greis der sich nicht zu helfen Weiss” (“On the branch sits an old man who can't give himself a helping hand”) – an obvious metaphor and critique on the current state of the Dual Monarchy. Other pillars of the Empire – like the army officers and bureaucrats – were also favorite targets of ridicule, usually made fun of because of their perceived lack of intelligence or self-control. During 1906, Zagreb hosted the first grand fair – Zagreb Fair (Zagrebački zbor). The events were mostly for entertaining purposes, consisting of evening concerts, culinary treats and binge drinking. Although some journalists romantically commented on these events, *Koprive* approached it in their own specific way, titling the images of over-drinking and over-eating as “the liveliest sector of economy”.¹⁴



A cartoon entitled *The Liveliest Sector of Economy*, *Koprive*, 1906

¹⁴ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 304-305.

4. *Koprive* and the political satire

Indeed, when reading *Koprive* during its earliest years, one might assume that no one was spared from their harsh critique. As a magazine published by the Progressives, most of the jokes were aimed at their political adversaries. Some of the parties and groups were constantly attacked, among them – the clericalists. The clericalists were usually addressed by the insulting moniker “furtimaši” (“furtimists”). In a way, the term is related to the rise of political Catholicism in Croatia, which began after 1900, when the First Croatian Catholic Congress was organized in Zagreb.¹⁵ The movement continued to develop further after 1903, when Pope Pius X began his pontificate. Vatican and Vienna began renewing their relationship, which effectively moved the political clergy closer to the Habsburg regime. In 1904 Croatian Catholic Publishing was founded under the sponsorship of the episcopate. Its main publication was the newspaper *Hrvatstvo* (*Croatian*). The new clerical organization announces it will fight against socialists, Progressives, and even liberal Catholicism.¹⁶ The proclamation of the organization was signed by Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer, among others. However, the newspaper *Obzor* (*Horizon*) published Strossmayer clarification, in which he commented that “he isn’t in agreement with the goals of the new party, and he never gave them his support”. Also, it was noted that Strossmayer was tricked into giving his signature by *furtim* (fraud). The Progressives readily accepted the new term, and hastily christened the publication *Hrvatstvo* as “furtimaški” (“furtimist”) and the political clergy as “furtimists”.¹⁷

Although they considered the clericalists as their political opposition, the editors and authors of *Koprive* made fun of the clergy in general, through stereotypes of priests as prone to promiscuity, over-eating, corruption and vice. This might be a good indicator of the magazine’s readership. By making general attacks and resorting to stereotypes, the authors probably meant to ridicule the clericalists not only for the entertainment of those familiar with the country’s political dynamics, but those mostly familiar with the clergy on everyday basis, as well. In the second issue of *Koprive*, the clergy was made fun of in the cartoon *Prijatelj malenih* (*A Friend of the Little Ones*), a satire on the clergy’s perceived promiscuity:

¹⁵ STRECHA, Mario. Katoličko pravaštvo: Politički katolicizam u Banskoj Hrvatskoj u predvečerje Prvoga svjetskoga rata (1904.-1910.). Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2011, p. 28.

¹⁶ ŠIDAK, ref. 3, pp. 219.

¹⁷ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 294.

Priest: (in the school, teaches about Jesus) Dear Children, Jesus was a great friend of the little ones.

Joškec: (a poor kid) Reverend, surely you are a great friend of the little ones yourself?

Priest: Why do you ask my dear?

Joškec: When my father came back home in the evening, he said to mom: Our preacher got another "little one"!¹⁸

Other negative characteristics attributed to the clergy were also ridiculed, like greed and lack of modesty. This was evident in the joke *Sa tjelovskog ophoda* (*From the Feast of Corpus Christi*):

Kid: Dad, what for is our archbishop leading the Feast celebration?

Father: For 1000 forints.¹⁹

The most oft-repeated jokes were those concerning the clergy's stereotypical over-eating and over-drinking. As evident in the joke titled *S Kaptola* (*From the Kaptol*):

A: Why are the gentlemen from Kaptol so generally well-fed?

B: Because they are literally following the word of the Lord: A man cannot live only by bread!²⁰



An example of a cartoon which ridicules the clericalists, entitled *A Friend of the Little Ones*. Koprive, 1906

¹⁸ n/a. Prijatelj malenih. In Koprive: list za satiru i humor, 1906, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 4.

¹⁹ n/a. Sa tjelovskog ophoda. In Koprive: list za satiru i humor, 1906, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 2.

²⁰ n/a. S Kaptola. In Koprive: list za satiru i humor, 1906, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 7.

Another of the magazine's constant targets was the Party of Rights (the Frankists), and their leader, Josip Frank. He was often portrayed as a shepherd of "calves", a derogatory term used for his supporters, who were portrayed as blind followers of their leader, even though his policies were without principles.²¹ This is how Frank was ridiculed in the joke *Zna katekizam* (*Knows Catechism*):

Catechist: Christ was the only man in this world that lived, died and came back from the dead...

Micek: No, mister catechist. I know one who had already died many times and risen from the dead – and still lives.

Catechist: Who's that?

*Micek: Dr. Frank!*²²

Frank was ridiculed through several aspects. For example, he was perceived as a servant of Vienna, as evident in the joke *Odlikovanje* (*Decoration*):

*Dr. Josip Frank, the leader and martyr of the Croatian people, received today a handwritten letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, count Aerenthal [sic], who asked him to give names and addresses of all of the right representatives, followers of [Ante] Starčević. As a sign of gratitude for their good and correct behavior in the Croatian parliament and their care for the integrity of the Monarchy, he wishes to give each of them an Easter present. A black and yellow colored egg with the Bosnian coat-of-arms.*²³

The clergy and Frank became a prominent object of ridicule after the Strassnoff affair. At the end of 1906, a man by the name of Ignaz Strassnoff came to Zagreb. He was a con artist who visited Frank and Juraj Posilović, Zagreb's archbishop. To Posilović, he introduced himself as an emissary from Vienna, sent to Croatia to investigate the accusations raised by the clergy against him. However, he told Frank a different story. He introduced himself as a state official, close to the highest circles of the Monarchy, sent on a mission to question the possibility of an Austrian-Croatian political alliance, ready for a fight against the Hungarians. He felt convincing to both Frank and Posilović, since he was well-informed about the current Croatian political situation. However, it was soon revealed that he was a fraud.²⁴ Strassnoff

²¹ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 306.

²² n/a. *Zna katekizam*. In Koprive: list za satiru i humor, 1907, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 2.

²³ n/a. *Odlikovanje*. In Koprive: list za satiru i humor, 1907, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 2.

²⁴ STRECHA, Mario. Politički katolicizam i politika "novog kursa": skupina oko *Hrvatstva* u borbi protiv politike "novoga kursa" u razdoblju vladavine Hrvatsko-srpske koalicije. In *Radovi – Zavod za hrvatsku povijest*, 2007, vol. 39, pp. 143-195.

politically tricked Frank and extracted large sums of money from Zagreb's clergy (more specifically, the candidates for the episcopate) by pretending to be a ministerial advisor.²⁵ In *Koprive*, the affair was commented upon through many jokes and caricatures. One of them was titled *Strassnoff iza ključanice* (*Strassnoff Behind Bars*). It is a cartoon which depicts Strassnoff in prison, commenting on the current state of affairs:

*It's true – I am a thief, and I shall spend three years in the cooler. And that is just! But, there are somewhat bigger thieves than me in Croatia. They are bestowed with great honors and support of the people, which enables them to live in freedom. That is not just!*²⁶



An example of a cartoon which ridicules Josip Frank and his political followers, portraying them as a shepherd with calves. *Koprive*, 1906

²⁵ HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 306.

²⁶ n/a. Strassnoff iza ključanice. In *Koprive*: list za satiru i humor, 1907, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 1.

Croatian People's Peasant Party – and its leader, Stjepan Radić – were another victim of the magazine's razor sharp satire. In the section *Mali oglasnik* (*Small Ads*) Radić was ridiculed thusly:

***For sale** – the entire peasant party, standing and laying, because of weak traffic, with all of the belongings, except for me and my family. Inquiries addressed to Stjepan Radić, Zagreb.*²⁷

Another satire, titled *Ominozno* (*Ominous*), makes fun of what is seen as Radić's lack of honesty:

*A Russian newspaper, which cooperates with Stjepan Radić, published a text in its advertising section dedicated to the magazine "Hrv. Misao", that ends like this: Owner and publisher Stjepan Radić, **Liar's Road**, Zagreb.*²⁸

Obviously, the jokes aimed against clericalists, Frank and Radić need to be analyzed in their political context. The Progressives – the publishers of *Pokret* and *Koprive* – were a part of the "New course" movement, and its established Croatian-Serbian coalition. The Croatian-Serbian coalition joined forces with the Hungarian opposition, to counter what was seen as a strengthening process of Germanisation. Their aim was to force Vienna into negotiations and thus achieve its political goals. Frank opposed the Croatian-Serbian coalition, because he believed that Croatia should form tighter bonds with Vienna and serve as its venue on the Balkans. As for Radić, his main ideal was a more federally arranged Monarchy, which would be achieved with Russia's assistance.²⁹

5. *Koprive* and the social satire

While the political content of the magazine is overwhelming, there is also the social aspect that needs to be addressed. It is interesting to see the treatment of another variety of topics, like women and other ethnic groups. When it comes to women, it seems they were mostly observed through the sexual aspect, be it promiscuity, adultery or married life. To clarify, while men were made fun of through numerous aspects and topics, women were

²⁷ n/a. *Mali oglasnik*. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1907, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 6.

²⁸ n/a. *Ominozno*. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1906, vol. 1, no. 5/6, pp. 10.

²⁹ STANČIĆ, Nikša. *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19. i 20. stoljeću*. Zagreb: Barbat, 2002, p. 199; ŠIDAK, ref. 3, pp. 218, 220.

ridiculed mostly through the aspect of carnal desires. Sex was treated as a tool for women to achieve pleasure or personal gain. An interesting indicator of the way women were perceived. For example, promiscuity is the topic in the joke *Kad se čovjek zarekne* (*When a Man Misspeaks*):

Anka: How can you hang around with that lady. She's already had five lovers.

Nella: But that's not true!

*Anka: I know it best. She – stole them from me!*³⁰

Adultery is addressed in the joke *Moderna kefica* (*Modern Girl*):

Little girl (in the bookstore): Please, I would like...

Bookseller: A book for love letters!

*Girl: Oh no! A book about divorce. Today, a girl needs to be interested in all of the things that she will need in the future.*³¹



A cartoon which showcases the magazine's stereotypical portrayal of women. *Koprive*, 1906

³⁰ n/a. Kad se čovjek zarekne. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1907, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 6.

³¹ n/a. Moderna kefica. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1907, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 6.

Women weren't the only group that was portrayed negatively. *Koprive* weren't immune to anti-Semitic jokes. Some of them were specifically aimed at Josip Frank, since he was a Jew by birth. In one of the magazine's first issues, a joke was published entitled *Kako se vremena mienjaju* (*How the Times Change*):

*Once, because of their wantonness, the Jews bowed before the golden calf. And today, the calves are bowing before the golden Jew.*³²

As was already mentioned, "calves" was the derogatory term for Frank's supporters in his Party of Rights. There were also anti-Semitic jokes which targeted the Jews' stereotypical physical appearance. For example, the joke *Pred menežarijom* (*Facing the Menagerie*):

*Little Ivica (after noticing a flamingo with a curved beak): Mommy, is it not true that this stork brings only Jewish children?*³³

The treatment of women and Jews in the Monarchy's popular culture is a complex issue. As evidenced by Frank, the magazine might be a reflection of a certain popular opinion, but it doesn't reflect the actual role some of the women and Jews had in the multicultural and multiethnic societies of the Dual Monarchy. The macrocosm that is the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its many specific social microcosms allowed individuals to overcome their gender or ethnic roles, an act which wasn't necessarily reflected in the popular culture or the popular opinion.³⁴

Another social topic covered by the magazine is the status of the workers. Their plight and unfair treatment were commented upon in several caricatures. A notable example was published in May 1907. A cartoon entitled *Nepravedna razdioba* (*An Unfair Division*) shows an obese, well-dressed industrialist observing the workers' parade. His comment:

*Industrialist: Hm! And people keep on talking about the unfair division of work and fortune. They will go to Tuškanac for a nice walk, while I'll lose the entire morning receiving orders and money.*³⁵

The positive portrayal of the workers shows that another large social class might have been considered a part of the magazine's audience.

³² n/a. *Kako se vremena mienjaju*. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1906, vol. 1, no. 5/6, pp. 3.

³³ n/a. *Pred menežarijom*. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1906, vol. 1, no. 5/6, pp. 6.

³⁴ ROSE, Alison. *Jewish Women in Fin de Siècle Vienna*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009, p. 219-220.

³⁵ n/a. *Nepravedna razdioba*. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1907, vol. 2, no. 7, pp. 1.



Cover of the May 1907 edition of the magazine, with the cartoon entitled *An Unfair Division*.

6. Forms of visual expression in the magazine *Koprive*

Koprive's impact wasn't limited to political and social aspects of popular culture. The magazine was especially important for the development of visual artistic forms presented within. Above all – caricature. It seems that the writer Antun Gustav Matoš made a crucial

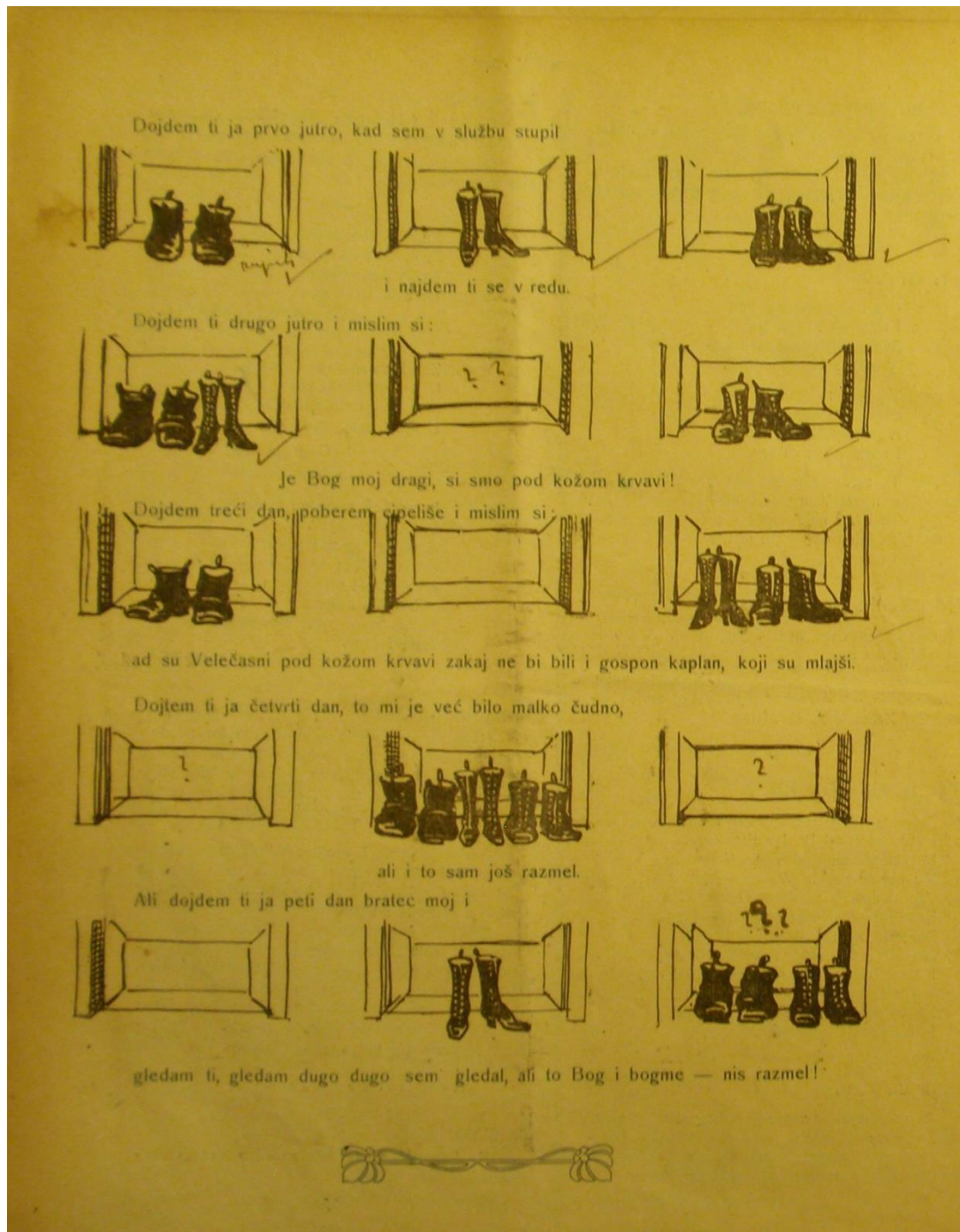
impact on the development of *Koprive*'s illustrated jokes. An artistic academy wasn't established in Zagreb until 1907. However, Matoš possessed an impressive knowledge on visual arts, especially of French cartoons and cartoonists. This made him an authoritative figure, which was able to advise and teach a younger generation of artists.³⁶ Slavko Vereš was present in the magazine since its very beginnings, and would remain with it until the very last issue published (which would be in 1941). Vereš was born in Croatian zagorje, and his birthplace would make a strong impact on his humor. His jokes were dry, sometimes sharp and colored with resignation, in the spirit of old peasant sayings. His cartoons mostly dealt with the small bourgeoisie and the peasants involved with Radić's movement. One of Vereš's earliest colleagues was the artist Branko Petrović. After 1908, they would be joined by Ljudevit Kara, Pjer Križanić, Božidar Uzelac and several authors from Dalmatia. Kara's cartoons revolved around the small bourgeoisie and lives of artists.³⁷ It's quite possible that Matoš's involvement attracted many talented artists to the magazine, making it a showcase of some rather inspired works.

It must be noted that *Koprive* was one of the first Croatian publications where a new art form was emerging – the sequential art, better known by the terms “comic book” or “comic strip”. Modern sequential art tracks its beginnings to the end of 19th century, when a competition between two media moguls in the United States – Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst – gave birth to first newspaper comic strips. The conflict of these moguls helped popularize the new art form and slowly spread it across the world. *Koprive* contained various examples of cartoons and illustrations that started developing the language of the comic strip. However, it is unclear whether these pre-comics were influenced by American newspapers or a set of works by several 19th century European artists, like Rodolphe Töpffer, Wilhelm Busch or Gustave Doré. In any case, one of the earliest examples of the art form in Croatia can be seen in a September 1906 edition of *Koprive*. The cartoon entitled *Začarane cipele: jedna čudnovata historija iz jednog župnoga dvora* (*Enchanted Shoes: A Strange Tale from a Parochial Court*) utilizes sequential storytelling to effectively comment on stereotypical promiscuity among the clergy. Simple movement of several sets of shoes through various posts shows the rate at which the priest kept changing his bedmates.³⁸

³⁶ DULIBIĆ, Frano. *Povijest karikature u Hrvatskoj do 1940. godine*. Zagreb: Leykam International, 2009, p. 143.

³⁷ DULIBIĆ, ref. 36, p. 144-145; HORVAT, ref. 5, p. 306.

³⁸ n/a. *Začarane cipele: jedna čudnovata historija iz jednog župnoga dvora*. In *Koprive: list za satiru i humor*, 1906, vol. 1, no. 5/6, pp. 3, 8.



A cartoon entitled *Enchanted Shoes: A Strange Tale from a Parochial Court*, an early example of sequential art in Croatia. Koprive, 1906

Despite these examples, Koprive's greatest achievement during this period would be the development of newspaper illustration. This was achieved by the aforementioned gathering of some outstanding cartoonists and illustrators, which brought some innovation into the field. When reading Croatian publications at the end of the 19th century, one could find illustrations by such talented painters as Ferdo Quiquerez, Bela Čikoš Sesija and Menci

Klement Crnčić. However, it was the appearance of Pjer Križanić, Slavko Vereš and Sergej Mironović that helped define the more specific profession of newspaper illustrators, those who would completely dedicate their craft to caricatures. Of course, this would provide a potent environment for development of other art forms as well, like sequential art.³⁹

7. Conclusion

When Khuen-Héderváry left the viceroy position, his iron grip over the state's political and social life started fading away. The response was immediate, with an instantaneous revival of the political and media scenes. This marked the beginning of a new kind popular culture, one filled with new ideas and new forms of expression. The satirical magazine *Koprive* was a good example of this. Some of the arguments related to the magazine's part in popular culture were already mentioned, but there are a few details that need to be addressed. During the earliest years of the magazine, the caricatures and illustrations varied in quality and often featured crude imagery. It is quite possible that they weren't exclusively meant to be observed by educated or informed citizens. Just like the textual jokes, the images featured stereotypes, as a means to inform a broad audience, possibly even those that couldn't read, but are able to register the image's message. Another argument for *Koprive* as part of popular culture lies in the language. Most of the times, the jokes weren't written in urban, educated slang, but mostly dialects used by workers, lower classes, even peasants. The humor is based on stereotypes. However, all of the social and political classes were stereotyped to ensure a broad appeal, where each group could have a laugh on the expense of the other. When one takes these arguments into consideration, it could be said that *Koprive*'s broad sense of humor was designed to capture the mass mentality of its readership. Furthermore, the magazine's impact can be traced to modern times, since a lot of the jokes wouldn't feel out of place in modern media. Likewise, the expressions and styles used by modern humorists can be traced back to those seen in *Koprive*.

In its specific way, *Koprive* helped define Croatia's popular culture at the turn of the century. It was all-encompassing, not only in the topics it covered, but the way it approached

³⁹ DRAGINČIĆ, Slavko – ZUPAN, Zdravko. Istorija jugoslovenskog stripa. Novi Sad: Forum, 1986, 12-13pp; HORVATIĆ, Dubravko. Ples smrti: Antologija hrvatskog likovnog humora. Zagreb: Društvo hrvatskih humorista, 1975, p. VIII.

them as well. There is a sense of accessibility in its editions, starting with the attractive picturesque covers, designed to attract a reader. Even though there are aspects of the magazine that today feel outdated and offensive, there is little doubt that *Koprive* present an important aspect of modernity. We could say its longevity is proof enough that its approach was successful. *Koprive* continued to shape Croatia's popular culture for 35 years, until the Second World War.

Summary

From 1883 to 1903 the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia was ruled by viceroy Károly Khuen-Héderváry. Faced with the task of transforming Croatia into an integral part of Kingdom of Hungary, he issued strict laws meant to paralyze the country's political life. Newspapers and magazines were heavily censored and confiscated. Critical journalism was *de facto* prohibited. In 1903, the crisis of the Dual Monarchy drove Khuen-Héderváry away from the viceroy position, which made an enormous impact on Croatia. Political and social life went through a state of renaissance. New political parties emerged – The “New Course” movement, the Progressives, the Peasant Party, clericalists, etc. Each political group started publishing its own publication. The libraries and newspaper stands were filled with new newspapers and magazines. Advocacy journalism flourished, with publications crystalizing the ideas and goals of new political movements. One of these were the Progressives, whose main publication was the newspaper *Pokret*. Eventually, *Pokret* would be accompanied by an outrageous satirical magazine called *Koprive*. Direct in its approach, there was rarely a topic that would go untouched by *Koprive*'s razor sharp satire. The Monarchy's highest authorities were ridiculed – the Emperor, the army, the bureaucrats and the aristocracy. Being a magazine published by the Progressives, a part of the “New Course” movement, its critique was mostly aimed at opposing political groups – clericalists, Josip Frank's Party of Rights, or Stjepan Radić's Peasant Party. The magazine possessed a strong social note as well. Workers were treated mostly in a positive light, as opposed to the industrialists who were ridiculed. The treatment of women and Jews was harsh, in line with the *zeitgeist*. One of the magazine's main cultural accomplishments was the role it played in forging of a new artistic profession, one aimed exclusively at newspaper illustration, which would make an even greater impact in decades to come, breeding a new generation of talented artists.

Marko Lovrić: Short biography

Born 1985 in Zagreb. Began studying history in 2009, at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. Since 2009 a member of the editorial board of the student journal *Pro tempore*. Written and published several texts during this period; cooperated with historians from around the world; and participated in organization of several events and round tables (for example, the round table “Annales: Designs and Accomplishments“ that took place in Zagreb, in 2010). Graduated in 2013. In the same year, began postgraduate studies of Modern and Contemporary Croatian history in European and World context at the University of Zagreb. Recently participated in the international conference “The Great War: Regional Approaches and Global Contexts”, organized in Sarajevo. Main area of research is cultural history of the late 19th and 20th century. More specifically, it concerns the history of modern media, especially the visual kind – cinema, television, caricature and sequential art.