
ACTA

ECCLESIASTICA

SLOVENIAE

30

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KARIKATURE V BOJU

PROTI VERI IN CERKVI

1945–1960

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Summary

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Caricatures in the Battle Against Religion and the Church 1945-1960

Caricatures in the Battle Against Religion and Church 1945-1960 was written as a research work of the role of caricature in the postwar period between 1945 and 1960. Primarily drafted as a frame for the research of 'priest court trials' through caricature, the topic in its great variety grew into a wider understanding of the role of the caricature in the propaganda war against religion and Church.

In the present time, caricatures are usually connected with daily newspapers which depict daily political topics in a comic way. Certainly, caricatures are not necessarily bound neither to newspapers nor to daily political events but appear also as independent works of art which portray general social spheres. However, their most significant influence and role are reserved to political and cultural events. Certain periods wished to have it ousted from the public life, but it kept coming back. Once as a maid to her patrons, at some other time as a repulsive obstacle. Its contents was very often a critical, cutting, pointed, slightly wicked and sometimes wrongful response to the social events. Once it has appeared in the mass media, it has become also a temptation of all the potential manipulators of public opinion. An able caricaturist is capable of making it a strong weapon which either mercifully emphasises the virtues or destructively exposes the faults.

Undoubtedly, the newspapers *Ljudska pravica* (People's Right) and *Slovenski poročevalec* (Slovenian Reporter) belong to the most important postwar newspapers that markedly influenced the public opinion in Slovenia. Another research source of the role of caricature in the battle against religion and the Church was the illustrated weekly *Pavliha* (Joker) which was interesting for the wider strata of society. The caricatures roughly comprise the period from the summer 1945 to the end of 1960 (in 1961 the law on the Legal Status of Religious Communities was passed). There are several hundred Church related caricatures. Therefore, I was obliged to limit my work solely to the caricatures which primarily refer to the Slovene (Yugoslav) area and the Slovenes (the Yugoslavs), in many cases to the events related to the establishment of authority in STO (Free Territory of Trieste), to other important world events and to the derision of the Catholic Church in general. The state pressure exerted on all levels of the Church is clearly evident from the caricatures. In general, this refers to priests and their role in the society, but it often targets also the bishops and the Pope. Not even the Catholic lay people are spared the attacks, in some cases also members of other religions in Slovenia.

Caricatures in the Battle Against Religion and Church 1945-1960 consists of three parts with regard to the printed media that is discussed. The first is the weekly *Pavliha*,

comprising 100 caricatures from 1945 to 1960, the second *Slovenski poročevalec* with 30 caricatures from 1950 to 1959, the third *Ljudska pravica* with 20 caricatures from 1945 to 1955. For some years, no caricatures featuring the researched topic existed in the daily newspapers, while they were constantly present in the weekly. *Ljudska pravica* and *Slovenski poročevalec* merged into daily newspaper *Delo* in 1959.

The book is designed in a reader-friendly format. On the right, there is the reproduction of the caricature and its source, on the left, its explanation. I used a partly different approach when writing the explanations for the weekly *Pavliha* as for the dailies. *Pavliha* does not publish articles to accompany the caricatures. Therefore, I searched for the explanation in secondary sources, which I then summarized and edited. For the explanation of the caricatures in the daily newspapers I mainly used the enclosed article if it existed. It could be very often found on other pages of the newspaper, sometimes even in the previous issue. The main purpose of my work is to present how the postwar media shaped the public image of the Church by using the caricature, what patterns were used to create negative stereotypes about bishops, priests, the lay people and the Catholic faith in general. Caricature is a subtle creation of stereotypes among the wide public. Its role manifests through the actual explanation of the related event or persons whereby I relied on several critical sources.

Only by studying the differences between the actual and distorted reporting, one can establish the manner and the purpose of a caricature. This also reveals the entire ideological mechanism, which impelled the caricaturists to engage in such bitter and dirty fight against the Church in Slovenia.

In the case of *Slovenski poročevalec* and *Ljudska pravica* the source, the article and the author (if signed) that refer to the caricature are given at the beginning of the explanation. The sources for the explanation of the *Pavliha* caricatures are quoted in the footnotes. In most cases, the texts have been edited to provide a logical whole and easy reading. I apologize to the authors of the professional literature in advance for not having quoted them in full.

The sources of the caricatures in the dailies and the weekly are available in the reading room of the National and University Library (NUK) in Ljubljana and in the libraries in larger Slovene towns. The dailies *Slovenski poročevalec* and *Ljudska pravica* are available in NUK on microfilms which makes it possible to copy the pages requested very quickly. The weekly *Pavliha* is available for the time being only in a bound form. Therefore one has to wait a little longer to copy or scan it. I use the usual font in the book. *Italics* is used for some word for word quotations of professional literature or newspapers. The names of priests, lay people and other persons who are subjects of the caricatures are written **in bold** for the sake of clarity.