



THE CROATIAN CARTOONIST ASSOCIATION
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HIRVATISTAN KARIKATÜRÜ CROATIAN CARTOON



METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY HUMOR
AND CARICATURE CENTRE

İSTANBUL, TÜRKİYE

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CROATIAN CARTOONIST ASSOCIATION

In 1984 numerous cartoonists from all over Croatia supported the initiative to found a cartoonist association. The main idea was to found an association that would help to enhance and protect artistic freedom and activities of Croatian cartoonists, and to affirm and promote the Croatian cartoon in the country and abroad.

The Croatian Cartoonist Association was founded on the day of its registration on June, 26 1985, and this year it celebrated its twenty-eighth birthday of successful work, and it can be stated that the daily publication of cartoons in newspapers and magazines is a kind of barometer showing social climate and measuring freedom of the press.

Ever since the beginning the Croatian Cartoonist Association has been a part of the international association of cartoonists FECO (Federation of Cartoonists Organizations). Next to Belgium, Netherlands and England, Croatia was one of the cofounders of that international organization.

The activity of the Association includes the publication of a periodical called Karika which helps the flow of information among members, and simplifies the participation of Croatian cartoonists at festivals around the world. Over the last few years members of the Associations have won many valuable prizes.

Every year the Association gives a special acknowledgement Oskarika to one of its members who had most success at the international festivals of cartoons that year.

Apart from sending cartoons to the international festivals, the Association has organized eighteen international festivals of cartoons in Zagreb and a few minor exhibitions in towns all over Croatia. More than 300 authors from 50 countries participate at the International festival of cartoons in Zagreb.

Every year the Croatian Cartoonist Association organizes the exhibit in which most of its 100 members participate. The members' exhibits have visited many different cities in the world ever since 2005, due to help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. The exhibits took place in Bucharest, Berlin, Stuttgart, San Pedro, Ottawa and Munchen. The Association presents the Croatian cartoon internationally in many different countries. In 2011, there was a very successful presentation in Norway and last year in France sponsored by the festival in Saint Just le Martel and as a part of the Croatian and French cultural cooperation project.

By starting its own web site (www.hdk.hr) at the beginning of 2001, the Croatian Cartoonist Association became a part of a narrow circle of cartoonist organizations over the world that have their own web site, and the number of registered users and guests from all over the world only confirms that it was a good move with a great benefit for both the Association and Croatian culture. On that site everybody can easily learn about the Association work, follow it and make a contact with the Association and individual members if they want to.

Thanks to the financial incentives of the Ministry of Culture and to the city of Zagreb, the Croatian Cartoonist Association has maintained the quality of work at the address Savska cesta 100 where all the members regularly meet once a week, and sometimes even more often.

CROATIAN CARTOONISTS' SENSE OF HUMOUR

On the occasion of introducing Croatian cartoonists and caricature drawers and their works in Turkey we should start from some basic information on the history of cartoon and caricature in Croatia.

The first period from 1846 to 1900 is limited with the year when the first cartoon significant for Croatia appeared and the first phase of humour magazine development, which is mostly related to Croatian Party of Rights magazines. At that time it is the political cartoon that is dominant. The second period is short and it lasts from 1901 to 1905, and it is a sort of a transition period, which is marked by cartoonists and magazines raising the artistic standard of the cartoon and the illustration from the previous period. Republishing of cartoons from German and Austrian magazines also raised the artistic quality of cartoons. The third golden period, from 1906 to 1940, started with the publishing of the most influential humour magazine called *Koprive (Nettles)* in Zagreb and it ended with its shutting down at the beginning of the Second World War. At the same period a group of portrait cartoonists from Split were given prominence by the humour magazine *Duje Balavac (Duje the Brat)* published from 1908 to 1923.

The period of the Second World War is marked by deterioration in quality and production of the cartoon and its ideology which is mostly left-wing and partisan oriented. The humour magazine *Kerempuh* was issued from 1945 to the seventies. Although *Kerempuh* was started by some left-wing oriented cartoonists, the editors had to get an approval from censors of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia to publish each and every number of the magazine. At the same time daily newspapers were publishing the situation cartoon problematizing everyday life of a common citizen and his family. It was in *Kerempuh* that Ico Voljevica (1922-2008) first presented his character called Grga from 1950 to 1955. And from 1955 to 2000 the adventures of that character were daily published in a newspaper which is probably one of the longest, uninterrupted serials in the cartoon history of the world. Something similar happened to the popular and long living character named Pero drawn by Oto Reisinger in the newspaper *Vjesnik*, published from 1961 to the present day at first from time to time and later on a daily basis. Such cartoons were so popular that numerous readers of the newspaper started to read them from the last page where they would first check on Grga or Pero's humorous comment and only then they would continue with the real news. The tradition of publishing cartoons daily still exists and three representatives are Srećko Puntarić (1952) with his *Felix*, Joško Marušić (1952) with his *Pawns & pedestrians* and Nikola Plečko (1974) with his *Štefica*. Their cartoons reach a wide audience.

The newest historic period of Croatian cartoon starts with Croatian sovereignty in 1991 because it was the year when conditions in publishing have considerably changed. As the freedom of speech was increasing, the quality of media, especially of some issues, was decreasing, and lately they sell fewer copies. This trend of decreasing interest in issues started in the eighties of the twentieth century and it still goes on. Aware of the negative trend, Croatian cartoonist founded the Croatian Cartoonists Association in 1985 and it successfully affirms the cartoon both in Croatia and abroad. If there were not for the Croatian Cartoonist Association, which organizes annual exhibits, international festivals and issues a newsletter, the cartoon in Croatia would almost disappear.

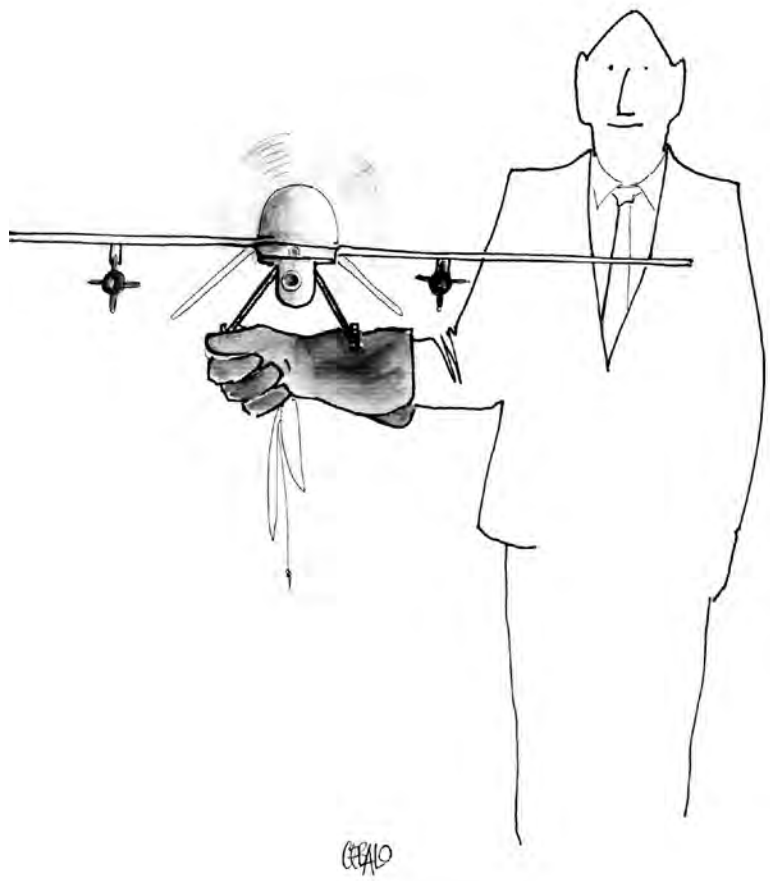
Although Turkey and Croatia are in different parts of Europe, having different traditions, climates and their people's mentality, when people in Turkey see cartoons drawn by Croatian cartoonists, it is clear that most drawings are inspired by some themes that we have in common and that are global. Every cartoonist has different drawing skills, different handwriting, but themes, humour and ideas (mostly expressed without words being used) are the same and as such most people on this endangered planet can understand them. The entire decay of our civilisation is visible in cartoons showing injustice, unnatural social differences, wars, ecological catastrophes, excessive urbanization, consumer society, fun industry, tourism and sport. All these things show how much the everyday life has become the same for a great number of people (unless they are extremely rich or poor).

Croatian cartoonists' humour warns of many paradoxes in our civilisation and their growing number, and the resistance to inhuman civilisation trend is too weak and brings almost no results. That is why the cartoon in spite of being marginalised still bravely defies, and acts as a medium that raises people's awareness in its simple and understandable way, making it possible for us to get the message that presents the mirror of ourselves and of the time we live in in visually humorous and very concise way.

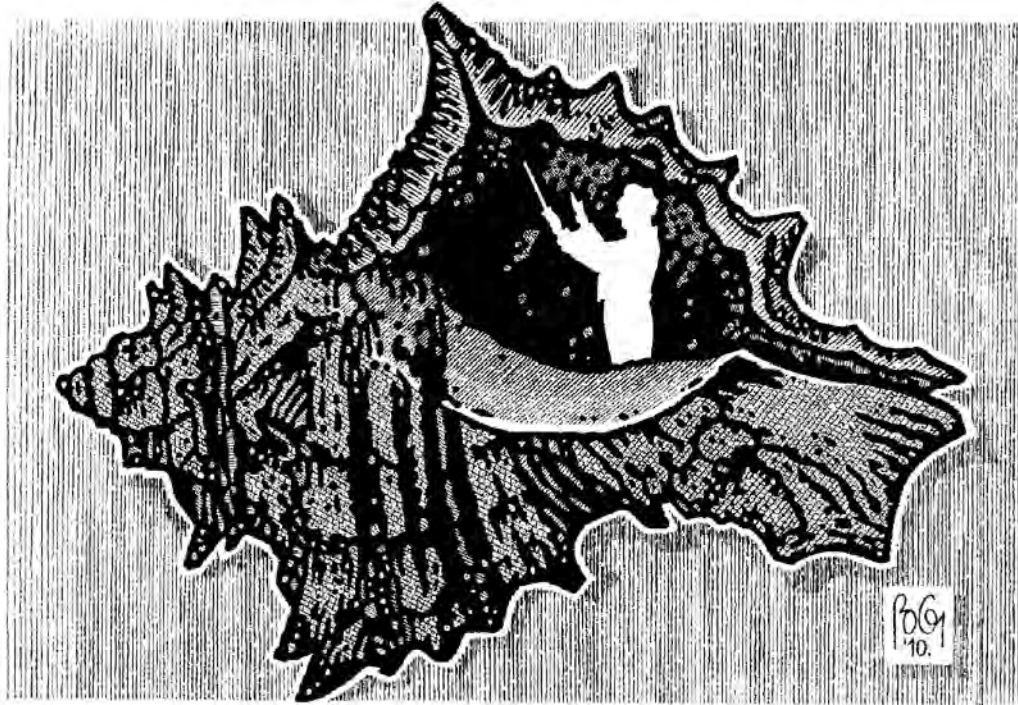
Frano Dulibić

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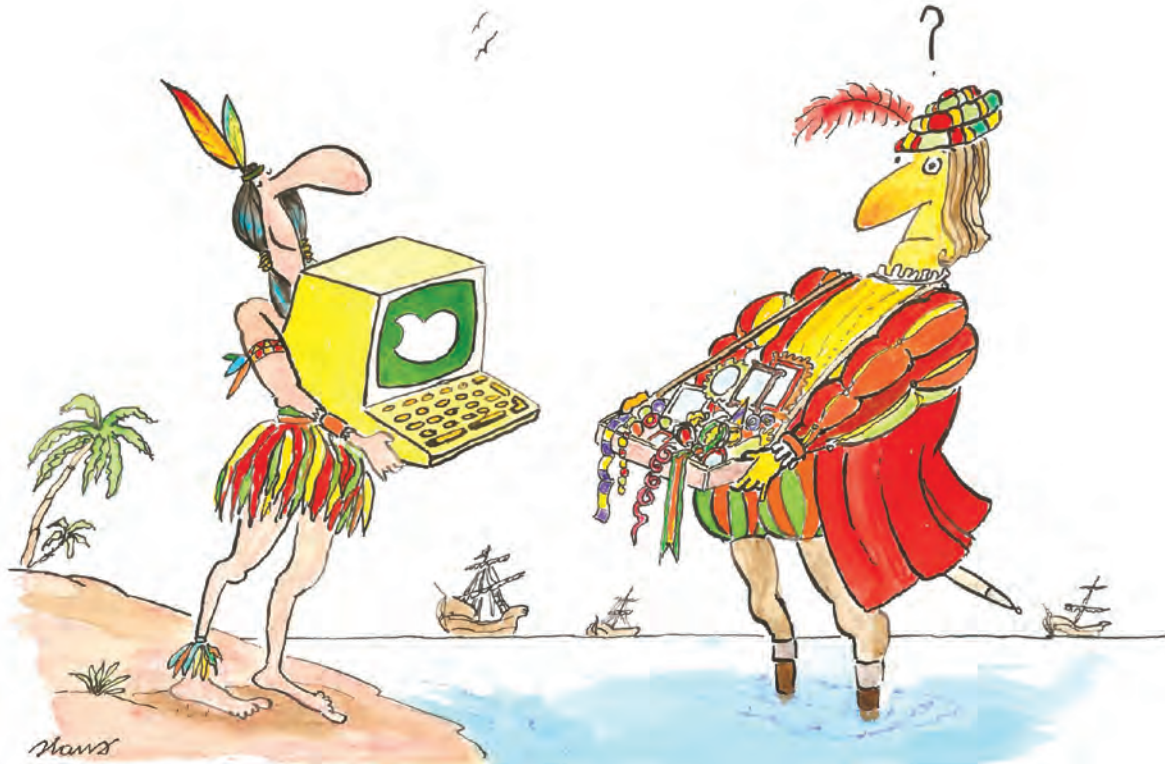


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